

THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS.

WITH
P R E F A C E S,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

L O N D O N:

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GAY.

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G A Y.

JOHN GAY, descended from an old family that had been long in possession of the manour of * Goldworthy in Devonshire, was born in 1688, at or near Barnstaple, where he was educated by Mr. Luck, who taught the school of that town with good reputation, and, a little before he retired from it, published a volume of Latin and English verses. Under such a master he was likely to form a taste for poetry. Being born without prospect of hereditary riches, he was sent to London in his youth, and placed apprentice with a silk-mercier.

How long he continued behind the counter, or with what degree of softness and dexterity

* *Goldworthy* does not appear in the *Villare*. Dr. J.

he received and accommodated the Ladies, as he probably took no delight in telling it, is not known. The report is, that he was soon weary of either the restraint or servility of his occupation, and easily persuaded his master to discharge him.

The dutchess of Monmouth, remarkable for inflexible perseverance in her demand to be treated as a princess, in 1712 took Gay into her service as secretary: by quitting a shop for such service, he might gain leisure, but he certainly advanced little in the boast of independence. Of his leisure he made so good use, that he published next year a poem on *Rural Sports*, and inscribed it to Mr. Pope, who was then rising fast into reputation. Pope was pleased with the honour; and when he became acquainted with Gay, found such attractions in his manners and conversation, that he seems to have received him into his inmost confidence; and a friendship was formed between them which lasted to their separation by death, without any known abatement on either part. Gay was the general favourite of the whole association of wits; but they regarded him as a play-fellow rather than a partner,

a partner, and treated him with more fondness than respect.

Next year he published *The Shepherd's Week*, six English pastorals, in which the images are drawn from real life, such as it appears among the rusticks in parts of England remote from London. Steele, in some papers of the *Guardian*, had praised Ambrose Philips, as the Pastoral writer that yielded only to Theocritus, Virgil, and Spenser. Pope, who had also published Pastorals, not pleased to be overlooked, drew up a comparison of his own compositions with those of Philips, in which he covertly gave himself the preference, while he seemed to disown it. Not content with this, he is supposed to have incited Gay to write the *Shepherd's Week*, to shew, that if it be necessary to copy nature with minuteness, rural life must be exhibited such as grossness and ignorance have made it. So far the plan was reasonable; but the Pastorals are introduced by a *Proeme*, written with such imitation as they could attain of obsolete language, and by consequence in a style that was never spoken nor written in any language or in any place.

But the effect of reality and truth became conspicuous, even when the intention was to shew them groveling and degraded. These Pastorals became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations, by those who had no interest in the rivalry of the poets, nor knowledge of the critical dispute.

In 1713 he brought a comedy called *The Wife of Bath* upon the stage, but it received no applause: he printed it, however; and seventeen years after, having altered it, and, as he thought, adapted it more to the public taste, he offered it again to the town; but, though he was flushed with the success of the *Beggar's Opera*, had the mortification to see it again rejected.

In the last year of queen Anne's life, Gay was made secretary to the earl of Clarendon, ambassador to the court of Hanover. This was a station that naturally gave him hopes of kindness from every party; but the Queen's death put an end to her favours, and he had dedicated his *Shepherd's Week* to Bolingbroke, which Swift considered as the crime that ob-
fructed

strusted all kindness from the house of Hanover.

He did not, however, omit to improve the right which his office had given him to the notice of the royal family. On the arrival of the princess of Wales, he wrote a poem, and obtained so much favour, that both the Prince and Princess went to see his *What d'ye call it*, a kind of mock-tragedy, in which the images were comic, and the action grave; so that, as Pope relates, Mr. Cromwell, who could not hear what was said, was at a loss how to reconcile the laughter of the audience with the solemnity of the scene.

Of this performance the value certainly is but little; but it was one of the lucky trifles that give pleasure by novelty, and was so much favoured by the audience, that envy appeared against it in the form of criticism; and Griffin, a player, in conjunction with Mr. Theobald, a man afterwards more remarkable, produced a pamphlet called *The Key to the What a' ye call it*; which, says Gay, "calls me a blockhead, and "Mr. Pope a knave."

But Fortune has always been inconstant. Not long afterwards (1717) he endeavoured to

entertain the town with *Three Hours after Marriage*; a comedy written, as there is sufficient reason for believing by the joint assistance of Pope and Arbuthnot. One purpose of it was to bring into contempt Dr. Woodward the Fossilist, a man not really or justly contemptible. It had the fate which such outrages deserve: the scene in which Woodward was directly and apparently ridiculed, by the introduction of a mummy and a crocodile, disgusted the audience, and the performance was driven off the stage with general condemnation.

Gay is represented as a man easily incited to hope, and deeply depressed when his hopes were disappointed. This is not the character of a hero; but it may naturally imply something more generally welcome, a soft and civil companion. Whoever is apt to hope good from others is diligent to please them; but he that believes his powers strong enough to force their own way, commonly tries only to please himself.

He had been simple enough to imagine that those who laughed at the *What d' ye call it* would raise the fortune of its author; and, finding nothing done, sunk into dejection.

His

His friends endeavoured to divert him. The earl of Burlington sent him (1716) into Devonshire; the year after, Mr. Pulteney took him to Aix; and in the following year lord Harcourt invited him to his seat, where, during his visit, two rural lovers were killed with lightning, as is particularly told in Pope's Letters.

Being now generally known, he published (1720) his Poems by subscription with such success, that he raised a thousand pounds; and called his friends to a consultation, what use might be best made of it. Lewis, the steward of lord Oxford, advised him to intrust it to the funds, and live upon the interest; Arbuthnot bade him intrust it to Providence, and live upon the principal; Pope directed him, and was seconded by Swift, to purchase an annuity.

Gay in that disastrous year * had a present from young Craggs of some South-sea-stock, and once supposed himself to be master of twenty thousand pounds. His friends persuaded him to sell his share; but he dreamed of dignity and splendour, and could not bear

* Spence.

to obstruct his own fortune. He was then importuned to sell as much as would purchase an hundred a year for life, "which," says Fenton, "will make you sure of a clean shirt and "a shoulder of mutton every day." This counsel was rejected: the profit and principal were lost, and Gay sunk under the calamity so low that his life became in danger.

By the care of his friends, among whom Pope appears to have shewn particular tenderness, his health was restored; and, returning to his studies, he wrote a tragedy called *The Captives*, which he was invited to read before the princess of Wales. When the hour came, he saw the princess and her ladies all in expectation, and advancing with reverence, too great for any other attention, stumbled at a stool, and falling forwards, threw down a weighty Japan screen. The princess started, the ladies screamed, and poor Gay, after all the disturbance, was still to read his play.

The fate of *The Captives*, which was acted at Drury-Lane in 1723-4, I know not*; but he

* It was acted seven nights. The Author's third night was by command of their Royal Highnesses. E.

now thought himself in favour, and undertook (1726) to write a volume of Fables for the improvement of the young duke of Cumberland. For this he is said to have been promised a reward, which he had doubtless magnified with all the wild expectations of indigence and vanity.

Next year the Prince and Princess became King and Queen, and Gay was to be great and happy; but on the settlement of the household he found himself appointed gentleman usher to the princess Louisa. By this offer he thought himself insulted, and sent a message to the Queen, that he was too old for the place. There seem to have been many machinations employed afterwards in his favour; and diligent court was paid to Mrs. Howard, afterwards countess of Suffolk, who was much beloved by the King and Queen, to engage her interest for his promotion; but solicitations, verses, and flatteries, were thrown away; the lady heard them, and did nothing.

All the pain which he suffered from neglect, or, as he perhaps termed it, the ingratitude of the court, may be supposed to have been driven away by the unexampled success of the *Beggar's Opera*.

Opera. This play, written in ridicule of the musical Italian Drama, was first offered to Cibber and his brethren at Drury-Lane, and rejected; it being then carried to Rich, had the effect, as was ludicrously said, of *making Gay rich, and Rich gay.*

Of this lucky piece, as the reader cannot but wish to know the original and progress, I have inserted the relation which Spence has given in Pope's words.

“ Dr. Swift had been observing once to Mr.
“ Gay, what an odd pretty sort of a thing a
“ Newgate Pastoral might make. Gay was in-
“ clined to try at such a thing for some time;
“ but afterwards thought it would be better to
“ write a comedy on the same plan. This was
“ what gave rise to the *Beggar's Opera*. He
“ began on it; and when first he mentioned it
“ to Swift, the Doctor did not much like the
“ project. As he carried it on, he shewed
“ what he wrote to both of us, and we now
“ and then gave a correction, or a word or two
“ of advice; but it was wholly of his own
“ writing.—When it was done, neither of us
“ thought it would succeed.—We shewed it to
“ Congreve; who, after reading it over, said,
“ It

“ It would either take greatly, or be damned
“ confoundedly. — We were all, at the first
“ night of it, in great uncertainty of the event;
“ till we were very much encouraged by over-
“ hearing the duke of Argyle, who sat in the
“ next box to us, say, ‘ It will do — it must
“ do ! I see it in the eyes of them.’ This was
“ a good while before the first act was over,
“ and so gave us ease soon ; for that duke (be-
“ sides his own good taste) has a particular
“ knack, as any one now living, in discovering
“ the taste of the publick. He was quite right
“ in this, as usual ; the good-nature of the
“ audience appeared stronger and stronger every
“ act, and ended in a clamour of applause.”

Its reception is thus recorded in the notes to
the *Dunciad*:

“ This piece was received with greater ap-
“ plause than was ever known. Besides being
“ acted in London sixty-three days without in-
“ terruption, and renewed the next season with
“ equal applause, it spread into all the great
“ towns of England ; was played in many places
“ to the thirtieth and fortieth time ; at Bath and
“ Bristol fifty, &c. It made its progress into
“ Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, where it was
“ per-

“performed twenty-four days successively.
“The ladies carried about with them the favourite songs of it in fans, and houses were
“furnished with it in screens. The fame of
“it was not confined to the author only. The
“person who acted Polly, till then obscure,
“became all at once the favourite of the town ;
“her pictures were engraved, and sold in great
“numbers ; her Life written, books of letters
“and verses to her published, and pamphlets
“made even of her sayings and jests. Furthermore, it drove out of England (for that season) the Italian Opera, which had carried
“all before it for ten years.”

Of this performance, when it was printed, the reception was different, according to the different opinion of its readers. Swift commended it for the excellence of its morality, as a piece that “placed all kinds of vice in the strongest and most odious light ;” but others, and among them Dr. Herring, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, censured it as giving encouragement not only to vice but to crimes, by making a highwayman the hero, and dismissing him at last unpunished. It has been even said, that, after the exhibition of the *Beggar's*

gar's Opera, the gangs of robbers were evidently multiplied.

Both these decisions are surely exaggerated. The play, like many others, was plainly written only to divert, without any moral purpose, and is therefore not likely to do good; nor can it be conceived, without more speculation than life requires or admits, to be productive of much evil. Highwaymen and house-breakers seldom frequent the play-house, or mingle in any elegant diversion; nor is it possible for any one to imagine that he may rob with safety, because he sees Macheath reprieved upon the stage.

This objection however, or some other rather political than moral, obtained such prevalence, that when Gay produced a second part under the name of *Polly*, it was prohibited by the Lord Chamberlain; and he was forced to recompense his repulse by a subscription, which is said to have been so liberally bestowed, that what he called oppression ended in profit. The * publication was so much favoured, that though the first part gained him four hundred

* Spence.

pounds, near thrice as much was profit of the second.

He received yet another recompense for this supposed hardship, in the affectionate attention of the duke and dutchess of Queensberry, into whose house he was taken, and with whom he passed the remaining part of his life. * The duke, considering his want of œconomy, undertook the management of his money, and gave it to him as he wanted it. But it is supposed that the discountenance of the Court sunk deep into his heart, and gave him more discontent than the applauses or tenderness of his friends could overpower. He soon fell into his old distemper, an habitual colick, and languished, though with many intervals of ease and cheerfulness, till a violent fit at last seized him, and carried him to the grave, as Arbuthnot reported, with more precipitance than he had ever known. He died on the fourth of December 1732, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. The letter which brought an account of his death to Swift was laid by for some days unopened, because when he received it

* Spence.

he was imprest with the preconception of some misfortune.

After his death, was published a second volume of Fables more political than the former. His opera of *Achilles* was acted, and the profits were given to two widow sisters, who inherited what he left, as his lawful heirs; for he died without a will, though he had gathered * three thousand pounds. There have appeared likewise under his name a comedy called the *Distrest Wife*, and the *Rehearsal at Gotham*, a piece of humour.

The character given him by Pope* is this, that "he was a natural man, without design, "who spoke what he thought, and just as he "thought it;" and that "he was of a timid "temper, and fearful of giving offence to the "great;" which caution however, says Pope, was of no avail.

As a poet, he cannot be rated very high. He was, as I once heard a female critick remark, "of a lower order." He had not in any great degree the *mens divinius*, the dignity of genius. Much however must be allowed to

* Spence.

the author of a new species of composition, though it be not of the highest kind. We owe to Gay the Ballad Opera; a mode of comedy which at first was supposed to delight only by its novelty, but has now by the experience of half a century been found so well accommodated to the disposition of a popular audience, that it is likely to keep long possession of the stage. Whether this new drama was the product of judgement or of luck, the praise of it must be given to the inventor; and there are many writers read with more reverence, to whom such merit of originality cannot be attributed.

His first performance, the *Rural Sports*, is such as was easily planned and executed; it is never contemptible, nor ever excellent. The *Fan* is one of those mythological fictions which antiquity delivers ready to the hand, but which, like other things that lie open to every one's use, are of little value. The attention naturally retires from a new tale of Venus, Diana, and Minerva.

His Fables seem to have been a favourite work; for having published one volume, he left another behind him. Of this kind of Fables,

bles, the authors do not appear to have formed any distinct or settled notion. Phædrus evidently confounds them with *Tales*, and Gay both with *Tales* and *Allegorical Prosopopæias*. A *Fable*, or *Apologue*, such as is now under consideration, seems to be, in its genuine state, a narrative in which beings irrational, and sometimes inanimate, *arbores loquuntur, non tantum feræ*, are, for the purpose of moral instruction, feigned to act and speak with human interests and passions. To this description the compositions of Gay do not always conform. For a Fable he gives now and then a Tale, or an abstracted Allegory; and from some, by whatever name they may be called, it will be difficult to extract any moral principle. They are, however, told with liveliness; the versification is smooth; and the diction, though now-and-then a little constrained by the measure or the rhyme, is generally happy.

To *Trivia* may be allowed all that it claims; it is spritely, various, and pleasant. The subject is of that kind which Gay was by nature qualified to adorn; yet some of his decorations may be justly wished away. An honest blacksmith might have done for Patty what is per-

formed by Vulcan. The appearance of Cloacina is nauseous and superfluous; a shoeboy could have been produced by the casual cohabitation of mere mortals. Horace's rule is broken in both cases; there is no *dignus vindice nodus*, no difficulty that required any supernatural interposition. A patten may be made by the hammer of a mortal; and a bastard may be dropped by a human strumpet. On great occasions, and on small, the mind is repelled by useless and apparent falsehood.

Of his little Poems the public judgement seems to be right; they are neither much esteemed, nor totally despised. The story of the Apparition is borrowed from one of the tales of Poggio. Those that please least are the pieces to which *Gulliver* gave occasion; for who can much delight in the echo of an unnatural fiction?

Dione is a counterpart to *Amynta*, and *Pestor Fido*, and other trifles of the same kind, easily imitated, and unworthy of imitation. What the Italians call comedies from a happy conclusion, Gay calls a tragedy from a mournful event; but the style of the Italians and of Gay is equally tragical. There is something in the
poetical

poetical *Arcadia* so remote from known reality and speculative possibility, that we can never support its representation through a long work. A Pastoral of an hundred lines may be endured; but who will hear of sheep and goats, and myrtle bowers and purling rivulets, through five acts? Such scenes please Barbarians in the dawn of literature, and children in the dawn of life; but will be for the most part thrown away, as men grow wise, and nations grow learned.

G R A N V I L L E.

OF GEORGE GRANVILLE, or as others write *Greenville*, or *Grenville*, afterwards lord Landfdown of Biddeford in the county of Devon, less is known than his name and rank might give reason to expect. He was born about 1667, the son of Bernard Greenville, who was entrusted by Monk with the most private transactions of the Restoration, and the grandson of Sir Bevil Greenville, who died in the King's cause, at the battle of Landfdowne.

His early education was superintended by Sir William Ellis; and his progress was such that before the age of twelve he was sent to Cam-

Cambridge*, where he pronounced a copy of his own verses to the princess Mary d'Este of Modena, then dutchess of York, when she visited the university.

At the accession of king James, being now at eighteen, he again exerted his poetical powers, and addressed the new monarch in three short pieces, of which the first is profane, and the two others such as a boy might be expected to produce; but he was commended by old Waller, who perhaps was pleased to find himself imitated, in six lines, which, though they begin with nonsense and end with dulness, excited in the young author a rapture of acknowledgement,

In numbers such as Waller's self might use.

It was probably about this time that he wrote the poem to the earl of Peterborough, upon his *accomplishment* of the duke of York's marriage with the princess of Modena, whose charms appear to have gained a strong preva-

* To Trinity College. By the university register, it appears, that he was admitted to his Master's Degree in 1679: we must, therefore, set the year of his birth some years back.

H.

lence over his imagination, and upon whom nothing ever has been charged but imprudent piety, an intemperate and misguided zeal for the propagation of popery.

However faithful Granville might have been to the King, or however enamoured of the Queen, he has left no reason for supposing that he approved either the artifices or the violence with which the King's religion was insinuated or obtruded. He endeavoured to be true at once to the King and to the Church.

Of this regulated loyalty he has transmitted to posterity a sufficient proof, in the letter which he wrote to his father about a month before the prince of Orange landed.

“ Mar, near Doncaster, Oct. 6, 1688.

“ To the honourable Mr. Barnard Granville,
“ at the earl of Bath's, St. James's.

“ SIR,

“ Your having no prospect of obtaining a
“ commission for me, can no way alter or cool
“ my desire at this important juncture to ven-
“ ture my life, in some manner or other, for
“ my King and my Country.

“ I can-

“ I cannot bear living under the reproach or
 “ lying obscure and idle in a country retirement,
 “ when every man who has the least sense of
 “ honour should be preparing for the field.

“ You may remember, Sir, with what re-
 “ luctance I submitted to your commands up-
 “ on Monmouth’s rebellion, when no impor-
 “ tunity could prevail with you to permit me
 “ to leave the Academy: I was too young to
 “ be hazarded; but, give me leave to say, it is
 “ glorious at any age to die for one’s country
 “ and the sooner the nobler the sacrifice.

“ I am now older by three years. My uncle
 “ Bathe was not so old when he was left among
 “ the slain at the battle of Newbury; nor you
 “ yourself, Sir, when you made your escape from
 “ your tutor’s, to join your brother at the de-
 “ fence of Scilly.

“ The same cause is now come round about
 “ again. The king has been misled; let those
 “ who have misled him be answerable for it.
 “ Nobody can deny but he is sacred in his own
 “ person; and it is every honest man’s duty to
 “ defend it.

“ You are pleased to say, it is yet doubtful
 “ if the Hollanders are rash enough to make
 “ such an attempt; but, be that as it will, I

“ beg leave to insist upon it, that I may be
“ presented to his majesty, as one whose ut-
“ most ambition it is to devote his life to his
“ service, and my country’s, after the example
“ of all my ancestors.

“ The gentry assembled at York, to agree
“ upon the choice of representatives for the
“ county, have prepared an address, to assure
“ his majesty they are ready to sacrifice their
“ lives and fortunes for him upon this and all
“ other occasions; but at the same time they
“ humbly beseech him to give them such ma-
“ gistrates as may be agreeable to the laws of
“ the land; for, at present, there is no autho-
“ rity to which they can legally submit.

“ They have been beating up for volunteers
“ at York, and the towns adjacent, to supply
“ the regiments at Hull; but nobody will lift.

“ By what I can hear, every body wishes
“ well to the King; but they would be glad his
“ ministers were hanged.

“ The winds continue so contrary, that no
“ landing can be so soon as was apprehended;
“ therefore I may hope, with your leave and
“ assistance, to be in readiness before any ac-
“ tion can begin. I beseech you, Sir, most
“ hum-

“humbly and most earnestly, to add this one
 “act of indulgence more to so many other tes-
 “timonies which I have constantly received of
 “your goodness; and be pleased to believe me
 “always with the utmost duty and submission,
 “Sir,

“Your most dutiful son,

“and most obedient servant,

“GEO. GRANVILLE.”

Through the whole reign of king William he is supposed to have lived in literary retirement, and indeed had for some time few other pleasures but those of study in his power. He was, as the biographers observe, the younger son of a younger brother; a denomination by which our ancestors proverbially expressed the lowest state of penury and dependance. He is said, however, to have preserved himself at this time from disgrace and difficulties by œconomy, which he forgot or neglected in life more advanced, and in better fortune.

About this time he became enamoured of the countess of Newburgh, whom he has celebrated with so much ardour by the name of Mira. He wrote verses to her before he was
 three

three and twenty, and may be forgiven if he regarded the face more than the mind. Poets are sometimes in too much haste to praise.

In the time of his retirement it is probable that he composed his dramattick pieces, the *Sh:-Gallants* (acted 1696), which he revised, and called *Once a Lover, and always a Lover*; *The Jew of Venice*, altered from Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* (1698); *Heroick Love*, a tragedy (1701); *The British Enchanters* (1706), a dramattick poem; and *Peleus and Thetis*, a masque, written to accompany *The Jew of Venice*.

The comedies, which he has not printed in his own edition of his works, I never saw *Once a Lover, and always a Lover*, is said to be in a great degree indecent and gross. Granville could not admire without bigotry; he copied the wrong as well as the right from his masters, and may be supposed to have learned obscenity from Wycherley, as he learned mythology from Waller.

In his *Jew of Venice*, as Rowe remarks, the character of *Shylock* is made comick, and we are prompted to laughter instead of detestation.

It

It is evident that *Heroick Love* was written, and presented on the stage, before the death of Dryden. It is a mythological tragedy, upon the love of Agamemnon and Chryseis, and therefore easily sunk into neglect, though praised in verse by Dryden, and in prose by Pope.

It is concluded by the wise Ulysses with this speech:

Fate holds the strings, and men like children move
But as they're led; success is from above.

At the accession of queen Anne, having his fortune improved by bequests from his father, and his uncle the earl of Bath, he was chosen into parliament for Fowey. He soon after engaged in a joint translation of the *Invectives against Philip*, with a design, surely weak and puerile, of turning the thunder of Demosthenes upon the head of Lewis.

He afterwards (in 1706) had his estate again augmented by an inheritance from his elder brother, Sir Bevil Granville, who, as he returned from the government of Barbados, died at sea. He continued to serve in parliament;
and

and in the ninth year of queen Anne was chosen knight of the shire for Cornwall.

At the memorable change of the ministry (1710), he was made secretary at war, in the place of Mr. Robert Walpole.

Next year, when the violence of party made twelve peers in a day, Mr. Granville became *Lord Lansdown Baron Biddeford*, by a promotion justly remarked to be not invidious, because he was the heir of a family in which two peerages, that of the earl of Bath and lord Granville of Potheridge, had lately become extinct. Being now high in the Queen's favour, he (1712) was appointed comptroller of the household, and a privy counsellor; and to his other honours were added the dedication of Pope's *Windjor Forest*. He was advanced next year to be treasurer of the household.

Of these favours he soon lost all but his title; for at the accession of king George his place was given to the earl Cholmondeley, and he was persecuted with the rest of his party. Having protested against the bill for attainting Ormond and Bolingbroke, he was, after the insurrection in Scotland, seized Sept. 26, 1715, as a suspected man, and confined in
the

the Tower till Feb. 8, 1717, when he was at last released, and restored to his seat in parliament; where (1719) he made a very ardent and animated speech against the repeal of the bill to prevent Occasional Conformity, which, however, though it was then printed, he has not inserted into his works.

Some time afterwards (about 1722), being perhaps embarrassed by his profusion, he went into foreign countries, with the usual pretence of recovering his health. In this state of leisure and retirement, he received the first volume of Burnet's History, of which he cannot be supposed to have approved the general tendency, and where he thought himself able to detect some particular falsehoods. He therefore undertook the vindication of general Monk from some calumnies of Dr. Burnet, and some misrepresentations of Mr. Echard. This was answered civilly by Mr. Thomas Burnet and Oldmixon; and more roughly by Dr. Colbatch.

His other historical performance is a defence of his relation Sir Richard Greenville, whom lord Clarendon has shewn in a form very unamiable. So much is urged in this apology,
to

to justify many actions that have been represented as culpable, and to palliate the rest, that the reader is reconciled for the greater part; and it is made very probable that Clarendon was by personal enmity disposed to think the worst of Greenville, as Greenville was also very willing to think the worst of Clarendon. These pieces were published at his return to England.

Being now desirous to conclude his labours, and enjoy his reputation, he published (1732) a very beautiful and splendid edition of his works, in which he omitted what he disapproved, and enlarged what seemed deficient.

He now went to Court, and was kindly received by queen Caroline; to whom and to the princess Anne he presented his works, with verses on the blank leaves, with which he concluded his poetical labours.

He died in Hanover-square, Jan. 30, 1735, having a few days before buried his wife, the lady Anne Villers, widow to Mr. Thynne, by whom he had four daughters, but no son.

Writers commonly derive their reputation from their works; but there are works which owe their reputation to the character of the writer.

writer. The publick sometimes has its favourites, whom it rewards for one species of excellence with the honours due to another. From him whom we reverence for his beneficence we do not willingly withhold the praise of genius; a man of exalted merit becomes at once an accomplished writer, as a beauty finds no great difficulty in passing for a wit.

Granville was a man illustrious by his birth, and therefore attracted notice: since he is by Pope styled "the polite," he must be supposed elegant in his manners, and generally loved: he was in times of contest and turbulence steady to his party, and obtained that esteem which is always conferred upon firmness and consistency. With those advantages, having learned the art of versifying, he declared himself a poet; and his claim to the laurel was allowed.

But by a critick of a later generation who takes up his book without any favourable prejudices, the praise already received will be thought sufficient; for his works do not shew him to have had much comprehension from nature, or illumination from learning. He seems to have had no ambition above the imitation of Waller, of whom he has copied the faults,
and

and very little more. He is for ever amusing himself with the puerilities of mythology; his King is Jupiter, who, if the Queen brings no children, has a barren Juno. The Queen is compounded of Juno, Venus, and Minerva. His poem on the dutchess of Grafton's lawsuit, after having rattled a while with Juno and Pallas, Mars and Alcides, Cassiope, Niobe, and the Propetides, Hercules, Minos, and Rhadamanthus, at last concludes its folly with profaneness.

His verses to Mira, which are most frequently mentioned, have little in them of either art or nature, of the sentiments of a lover, or the language of a poet: there may be found, now-and-then, a happier effort; but they are commonly feeble and unaffecting, or forced and extravagant.

His little pieces are seldom either spritely or elegant, either keen or weighty. They are trifles written by idleness, and published by vanity. But his Prologues and Epilogues have a just claim to praise.

The *Progress of Beauty* seems one of his most elaborate pieces, and is not deficient in splendor and gaiety; but the merit of original thought

thought is wanting. Its highest praise is the spirit with which he celebrates king James's consort, when she was a queen no longer.

The *Essay on unnatural Flights in Poetry* is not inelegant nor injudicious, and has something of vigour beyond most of his other performances: his precepts are just, and his cautions proper; they are indeed not new, but in a didactic poem novelty is to be expected only in the ornaments and illustrations. His poetical precepts are accompanied with agreeable and instructive notes.

The Masque of *Peleus and Thetis* has here and there a pretty line; but it is not always melodious, and the conclusion is wretched.

In his *British Enchanters* he has bidden defiance to all chronology, by confounding the inconsistent manners of different ages; but the dialogue has often the air of Dryden's rhyming plays; and the songs are lively, though not very correct. This is, I think, far the best of his works; for if it has many faults, it has likewise passages which are at least pretty, though they do not rise to any high degree of excellence.

Y A L D E N.

THOMAS YALDEN, the sixth son of Mr. John Yalden of Suffex, was born in the city of Exeter in 1671. Having been educated in the grammar-school belonging to Magdalen College in Oxford, he was in 1690, at the age of nineteen, admitted commoner of Magdalen Hall, under the tuition of *Josiah Pullen*, a man whose name is still remembered in the university. He became next year one of the scholars of Magdalen College, where he was distinguished by a lucky accident.

It was his turn, one day, to pronounce a declamation; and Dr. Hough, the president, happening to attend, thought the composition too good to be the speaker's. Some time after, the doctor finding him a little irregularly busy
in

in the library, set him an exercise for punishment ; and, that he might not be deceived by any artifice, locked the door. Yalden, as it happened, had been lately reading on the subject given, and produced with little difficulty a composition which so pleased the president, that he told him his former suspicions, and promised to favour him.

Among his contemporaries in the college were Addison and Sacheverell, men who were in those times friends, and who both adopted Yalden to their intimacy. Yalden continued, throughout his life, to think as probably he thought at first, yet did not lose the friendship of Addison.

When Namur was taken by king William, Yalden made an ode. There was never any reign more celebrated by the poets than that of William, who had very little regard for song himself, but happened to employ ministers who pleased themselves with the praise of patronage.

Of this ode mention is made in an humorous poem of that time, called *The Oxford Laureat* ; in which, after many claims had been made and rejected, Yalden is represented as demand-

ing the laurel, and as being called to his trial, instead of receiving a reward.

His crime was for being a felon in verse,
 And presenting his theft to the king ;
 The first was a trick not uncommon or scarce,
 But the last was an impudent thing :
 Yet what he had stol'n was so little worth stealing.
 They forgave him the damage and cost :
 Had he ta'en the whole ode, as he took it piece-mealing,
 They had fin'd him but ten-pence at most.

The poet whom he was charged with robbing was Congreve.

He wrote another poem on the death of the duke of Gloucester.

In 1710 he became fellow of the college ; and next year, entering into orders, was presented by the society with a living in Warwickshire, consistent with the fellowship, and chosen lecturer of moral philosophy, a very honourable office.

On the accession of queen Anne he wrote another poem ; and is said, by the author of the *Biographia*, to have declared himself of the party who had the honourable distinction of High-churchmen.

In

In 1706 he was received into the family of the duke of Beaufort. Next year he became doctor in divinity, and soon after resigned his fellowship and lecture; and, as a token of his gratitude, gave the college a picture of their founder.

He was made rector of *Chalton* and *Cleanville*, two adjoining towns and benefices in Hertfordshire; and had the prebends, or sinecures, of *Deans*, *Hains*, and *Pendles*, in Devonshire. He had before* been chosen, in 1698, preacher of Bridewell Hospital, upon the resignation of Dr. Atterbury†.

From this time he seems to have led a quiet and inoffensive life, till the clamour was raised about Atterbury's plot. Every loyal eye was on the watch for abettors or partakers of the horrid conspiracy; and Dr. Yalden, having some acquaintance with the bishop, and being familiarly conversant with Kelly his secretary, fell under suspicion, and was taken into custody.

* Not till long after. N.

† Dr. Atterbury retained the office of preacher at Bridewell, till his promotion to the Bishoprick of Rochester. Dr. Yalden succeeded him as preacher in June, 1713. N.

Upon his examination he was charged with a dangerous correspondence with Kelly. The correspondence he acknowledged; but maintained, that it had no treasonable tendency. His papers were seized; but nothing was found that could fix a crime upon him, except two words in his pocket-book, *thorough-paced doctrine*. This expression the imagination of his examiners had impregnated with treason, and the doctor was enjoined to explain them. Thus pressed, he told them that the words had lain unheeded in his pocket-book from the time of queen Anne, and that he was ashamed to give an account of them; but the truth was, that he had gratified his curiosity one day, by hearing *Daniel Burges* in the pulpit, and those words was a memorial hint of a remarkable sentence by which he warned his congregation to "beware of" thorough-paced doctrine, "that doctrine which coming in at "one ear, paces through the head, and goes "out at the other."

Nothing worse than this appearing in his papers, and no evidence arising against him, he was set at liberty.

It will not be supposed that a man of this character attained high dignities in the church; but he still retained the friendship, and frequented the conversation, of a very numerous and splendid set of acquaintance. He died July 16, 1736, in the 66th year of his age.

Of his poems, many are of that irregular kind, which, when he formed his poetical character, was supposed to be Pindarick. Having fixed his attention on Cowley as a model, he has attempted in some sort to rival him, and has written a *Hymn to Darknefs*, evidently as a counter-part to Cowley's *Hymn to Light*.

This hymn seems to be his best performance, and is, for the most part, imagined with great vigour, and expressed with great propriety. I will not transcribe it. The seven first stanzas are good; but the third, fourth, and seventh, are the best; the eighth seems to involve a contradiction; the tenth is exquisitely beautiful; the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, are partly mythological, and partly religious, and therefore not suitable to each other; he might better have made the whole merely philosophical.

There are two stanzas in this poem where Yalden may be suspected, though hardly convicted, of having consulted the *Hymnus ad Uram* of *Wowerus*, in the sixth stanza, which answers in some sort to these lines :

Illa suo præest nocturnis numine sacris—
Perque vias errare novis dat spectra figuris,
Manesque excitos medios ululare per agros
Sub noctem, et questu notos complere penates.

And again at the conclusion :

Illa suo senium secludit corpore toto
Haud numerans jugi fugientia secula lapsu,
Ergo ubi postremum mundi compage solutâ
Hanc rerum molem suprema absumpserit hora
Ipsa leves cineres nube amplectetur opacâ,
Et prisco imperio rursus dominabitur UMBRA.

His *Hymn to Light* is not equal to the other. He seems to think that there is an East absolute and positive where the Morning rises.

In the last stanza, having mentioned the sudden eruption of new created Light, he says,

A while th' Almighty wondering stood.

He

He ought to have remembered that Infinite Knowledge can never wonder. All wonder is the effect of novelty upon ignorance.

Of his other poems it is sufficient to say that they deserve perusal, though they are not always exactly polished, though the rhymes are sometimes very ill sorted, and though his faults seem rather the omissions of idleness than the negligences of enthusiasm.

T I C K E L L.

THOMAS TICKELL, the son of the reverend Richard Tickell, was born in 1686 at Bridekirk in Cumberland; and in April 1701 became a member of Queen's College in Oxford; in 1708 he was made Master of Arts, and two years afterwards was chosen Fellow; for which, as he did not comply with the statutes by taking orders, he obtained a dispensation from the Crown. He held his Fellowship till 1726, and then vacated it, by marrying, in that year, at Dublin.

Tickell was not one of those scholars who wear away their lives in closets; he entered early into the world, and was long busy in publick affairs; in which he was initiated under the patronage of Addison, whose notice
he

he is said to have gained by his verses in praise of *Rosamond*.

To those verses it would not have been just to deny regard ; for they contain some of the most elegant encomiastick strains ; and, among the innumerable poems of the same kind, it will be hard to find one with which they need to fear a comparison. It may deserve observation, that when Pope wrote long afterwards in praise of Addison, he has copied, at least has resembled Tickell.

Let joy salute fair Rosamonda's shade,
And wreaths of myrtle crown the lovely maid.
While now perhaps with Dido's ghost she roves,
And hears and tells the story of their loves,
Alike they mourn, alike they bless their fate,
Since Love, which made them wretched, made
 them great.

Nor longer that relentless doom bemoan,
Which gain'd a Virgil and an Addison,

TICKELL.

Then future ages with delight shall see
How Plato's, Bacon's, Newton's, looks agree ;
Or in fair series laurel'd bards be shown,
A Virgil there, and here an Addison. POPE.

He

He produced another piece of the same kind at the appearance of *Cato*, with equal skill, but not equal happiness.

When the ministers of queen Anne were negotiating with France, Tickell published *The Prospect of Peace*, a poem, of which the tendency was to reclaim the nation from the pride of conquest to the pleasures of tranquillity. How far Tickell, whom Swift afterwards mentioned as *Whiggissimus*, had then connected himself with any party, I know not; this poem certainly did not flatter the practices, or promote the opinions, of the men by whom he was afterwards befriended.

Mr. Addison, however he hated the men then in power, suffered his friendship to prevail over his publick spirit, and gave in the *Spectator* such praises of Tickell's poem, that when, after having long wished to peruse it, I laid hold on it at last, I thought it unequal to the honours which it had received, and found it a piece to be approved rather than admired. But the hope excited by a work of genius, being general and indefinite, is rarely gratified. It was read at that time with so much favour, that six editions were sold.

At

At the arrival of king George he sung *The Royal Progress*; which being inserted in the *Spectator* is well known, and of which it is just to say, that it is neither high nor low.

The poetical incident of most importance in Tickell's life was his publication of the first book of the *Iliad* as translated by himself, an apparent opposition to Pope's *Homer*, of which the first part made its entrance into the world at the same time.

Addison declared that the rival versions were both good; but that Tickell's was the best that ever was made; and with Addison the wits, his adherents and followers, were certain to concur. Pope does not appear to have been much dismayed; "for," says he, "I have the town, that is, the mob on my side." But he remarks, "that it is common for the smaller party to make up in diligence what they want in numbers; he appeals to the people as his proper judges; and if they are not inclined to condemn him, he is in little care about the high-flyers at Button's.

Pope did not long think Addison an impartial judge; for he considered him as the writer of Tickell's version. The reasons for his suspicion

picion I will literally transcribe from Mr Spence's Collection.

“ There had been a coldness (said Mr. Pope)
“ between Mr. Addison and me for some time;
“ and we had not been in company together,
“ for a good while, any where but at Button's
“ coffee-house, where I used to see him almost
“ every day.—On his meeting me there, one
“ day in particular, he took me aside, and
“ said he should be glad to dine with me, at
“ such a tavern, if I staid till those people
“ were gone (Budgell and Philips). He went
“ accordingly; and after dinner Mr. Addison
“ said, ‘ That he had wanted for some time to
“ talk with me; that his friend Tickell had
“ formerly, whilst at Oxford, translated the
“ first book of the *Iliad*; that he designed to
“ print it, and had desired him to look it over;
“ that he must therefore beg that I would not
“ desire him to look over my first book, be-
“ cause, if he did, it would have the air of
“ double dealing.’ I assured him that I did not
“ at all take it ill of Mr. Tickell that he was
“ going to publish his translation; that he cer-
“ tainly had as much right to translate any au-
“ thor as myself; and that publishing both was
“ entering

“ entering on a fair stage. I then added, that
“ I would not desire him to look over my first
“ book of the *Iliad*, because he had looked over
“ Mr. Tickell’s; but could wish to have the
“ benefit of his observations on my second,
“ which I had then finished, and which Mr.
“ Tickell had not touched upon. Accordingly
“ I sent him the second book the next morn-
“ ing : and Mr. Addison a few days after re-
“ turned it, with very high commendations.—
“ Soon after it was generally known that Mr.
“ Tickell was publishing the first book of the
“ *Iliad*, I met Dr. Young in the street; and,
“ upon our falling into that subject, the Doctor
“ expressed a great deal of surprize at Tickell’s
“ having had such a translation so long by him.
“ He said, that it was inconceivable to him,
“ and that there must be some mistake in the
“ matter ; that each used to communicate to
“ the other whatever verses they wrote, even
“ to the least things ; that Tickell could not
“ have been busied in so long a work there
“ without his knowing something of the mat-
“ ter; and that he had never heard a single
“ word on it till on this occasion. This sur-
“ prise of Dr. Young, together with what
“ Steele

“ Steele has said against Tickell in relation to
 “ this affair, make it highly probable that there
 “ was some underhand dealing in that business;
 “ and indeed Tickell himself, who is a very
 “ fair worthy man, has since, in a manner, as
 “ good as owned it to me. When it was in-
 “ troduced into a conversation between Mr.
 “ Tickell and Mr. Pope by a third person,
 “ Tickell did not deny it; which, considering
 “ his honour and zeal for his departed friend,
 “ was the same as owning it.”

Upon these suspicions, with which Dr. Warburton hints that other circumstances concurred, Pope always in his *Art of Sinking* quotes this book as the work of Addison.

To compare the two translations would be tedious; the palm is now given universally to Pope; but I think the first lines of Tickell's were rather to be preferred, and Pope seems to have since borrowed something from them in the correction of his own.

When the Hanover succession was disputed, Tickell gave what assistance his pen would supply. His *Letter to Avignon* stands high among party-poems; it expresses contempt without coarseness, and superiority without insolence. It
 had

had the success which it deserved, being five times printed.

He was now intimately united to Mr. Addison, who when he went into Ireland as secretary to the lord Sunderland, took him thither, and employed him in publick business; and when (1717) afterwards he rose to be secretary of state, made him under-secretary. Their friendship seems to have continued without abatement; for when Addison died, he left him the charge of publishing his works, with a solemn recommendation to the patronage of Craggs.

To these works he prefixed an elegy on the author, which could owe none of its beauties to the assistance which might be suspected to have strengthened or embellished his earlier compositions; but neither he nor Addison ever produced nobler lines than are contained in the third and fourth paragraphs; nor is a more sublime or more elegant funeral-poem to be found in the whole compass of English literature.

He was afterwards (about 1725) made secretary to the Lords justices of Ireland, a place of great honour; in which he continued till 1740,

when he died on the twenty-third of April at Bath.

Of the poems yet unmentioned the longest is *Kensington Gardens*, of which the versification is smooth and elegant; but the fiction unskillfully compounded of Grecian Deities and Gothick Fairies. Neither species of those exploded Beings could have done much; and when they are brought together, they only make each other contemptible. To Tickell, however, cannot be refused a high place among the minor poets; nor should it be forgotten that he was one of the contributors to the *Spectator*. With respect to his personal character, he is said to have been a man of gay conversation, at least a temperate lover of wine and company, and in his domestick relations without censure.

HAMMOND.

H A M M O N D.

OF Mr. HAMMOND, though he be well remembered as a man esteemed and caressed by the elegant and the great, I was at first able to obtain no other memorials than such as are supplied by a book called *Cibber's Lives of the Poets*; of which I take this opportunity to testify that it was not written, nor, I believe, ever seen, by either of the Cibbers; but was the work of Robert Shiels, a native of Scotland, a man of very acute understanding, though with little scholastick education, who, not long after the publication of his work, died in London of a consumption. His life was virtuous, and his end was pious. Theophilus Cibber, then a prisoner for debt, imparted, as I was told, his name for ten guineas

The manuscript of Shiels is now in my possession.

I have since found that Mr. Shiels, though he was no negligent enquirer, had been misled by false accounts; for he relates that James Hammond, the author of the *Elegies*, was the son of a Turkey merchant, and had some office at the prince of Wales's court, till love of a lady, whose name was Dashwood, for a time disordered his understanding. He was unextinguishably amorous, and his mistress inexorably cruel.

Of this narrative, part is true, and part false. He was the second son of Anthony Hammond, a man of note among the wits, poets, and parliamentary orators, in the beginning of this century, who was allied to Sir Robert Walpole by marrying his sister*. He was born about 1710, and educated at Westminster-school; but it does not appear that he was of any university. He was equerry to the prince of Wales, and seems to have come very early into

* This account is still erroneous. James Hammond our author was of a different family, the second son of Anthony Hammond, of Somersham-place, in the county of Huntingdon, Esq. See *Gent. Mag.* vol. LVII. p. 780. E.

publick notice, and to have been distinguished by those whose friendship prejudiced mankind at that time in favour of the man on whom they were bestowed; for he was the companion of Cobham, Lyttleton, and Chesterfield. He is said to have divided his life between pleasure and books; in his retirement forgetting the town, and in his gaiety losing the student. Of his literary hours all the effects are here exhibited, of which the Elegies were written very early, and the Prologue not long before his death.

In 1741, he was chosen into parliament for Truro in Cornwall, probably one of those who were elected by the Prince's influence; and died next year in June at Stowe, the famous seat of the lord Cobham. His mistress long outlived him, and in 1779 died unmarried. The character which her lover bequeathed her was, indeed, not likely to attract courtship.

The Elegies were published after his death; and while the writer's name was remembered with fondness, they were read with a resolution to admire them. The commendatory preface of the editor, who was then believed, and is

now affirmed by Dr. Maty, to be the earl of Chesterfield, raised strong prejudices in their favour.

But of the prefacer, whoever he was, it may be reasonably suspected that he never read the poems; for he professes to value them for a very high species of excellence, and recommends them as the genuine effusions of the mind, which expresses a real passion in the language of nature. But the truth is, these elegies have neither passion, nature, nor manners. Where there is fiction, there is no passion; he that describes himself as a shepherd, and his Neæra or Delia; as a shepherdess, and talks of goats and lambs, feels no passion. He that courts his mistress with Roman imagery deserves to lose her; for she may with good reason suspect his sincerity. Hammond has few sentiments drawn from nature, and few images from modern life. He produces nothing but frigid pedantry. It would be hard to find in all his productions three stanzas that deserve to be remembered.

Like other lovers, he threatens the lady with dying; and what then shall follow?

Wilt

Wilt thou in tears thy lover's corse attend ;

With eyes averted light the solemn pyre,
Till all around the doleful flames ascend,

Then, slowly sinking, by degrees expire ?

To sooth the hovering soul be thine the care,

With plaintive cries to lead the mournful band.

In fable weeds the golden vase to bear,

And cull my ashes with thy trembling hand :

Panchaia's odours be their costly feast,

And all the pride of Asia's fragrant year,

Give them the treasures of the farthest East,

And, what is still more precious, give thy tear.

Surely no blame can fall upon a nymph who rejected a swain of so little meaning.

His verses are not rugged, but they have no sweetness ; they never glide in a stream of melody. Why Hammond or other writers have thought the quatrain of ten syllables elegiac, it is difficult to tell. The character of the Elegy is gentleness and tenuity ; but this stanza has been pronounced by Dryden, whose knowledge of English metre was not inconsiderable, to be the most magnificent of all the measures which our language affords.

S O M E R V I L E.

OF Mr. SOMERVILE's life I am not able to say any thing that can satisfy curiosity.

He was a gentleman whose estate was in Warwickshire; his house, where he was born in 1692, is called Edstou, a seat inherited from a long line of ancestors; for he was said to be of the first family in his county. He tells of himself, that he was born near the Avon's banks. He was bred at Winchester-school, and was elected fellow of New College. It does not appear that in the places of his education, he exhibited any uncommon proofs of genius or literature. His powers were first displayed in the country, where he was distinguished

guished as a poet, a gentleman, and a skilful and useful justice of the Peace.

Of the close of his life, those whom his poems have delighted will read with pain the following account, copied from the Letters of his friend Shenstone, by whom he was too much resembled.

“ —Our old friend Somervile is dead ! I
 “ did not imagine I could have been so sorry
 “ as I find myself on this occasion.—*Sublatum*
 “ *querimus*. I can now excuse all his foibles ;
 “ impute them to age, and to distress of cir-
 “ cumstances ; the last of these considerations
 “ wrings my very soul to think on. For a
 “ man of high spirit, conscious of having (at
 “ least in one production) generally pleased the
 “ world, to be plagued and threatened by
 “ wretches that are low in every sense ; to be
 “ forced to drink himself into pains of the
 “ body, in order to get rid of the pains of the
 “ mind, is a misery.”—He died July 19, 1742,
 and was buried at Wotton, near Henley on
 Arden.

His distresses need not be much pitied : his
 estate is said to be fifteen hundred a year, which
 by his death has devolved to lord Somervile of
 Scotland.

Scotland. His mother indeed, who lived till ninety, had a jointure of fix hundred.

It is with regret that I find myself not better enabled to exhibit memorials of a writer, who at least must be allowed to have set a good example to men of his own class, by devoting part of his time to elegant knowledge; and who has shewn, by the subjects which his poetry has adorned, that it is practicable to be at once a skilful sportsman and a man of letters.

Somervile has tried many modes of poetry; and though perhaps he has not in any reached such excellence as to raise much envy, it may commonly be said at least that "he writes very well for a gentleman." His serious pieces are sometimes elevated, and his trifles are sometimes elegant. In his verses to Addison, the couplet which mentions *Clio* is written with the most exquisite delicacy of praise; it exhibits one of those happy strokes that are seldom attained. In his Odes to Marlborough there are beautiful lines; but in the second Ode he shews that he knew little of his hero, when he talks of his private virtues. His subjects are commonly such as require no
great

great depth of thought or energy of expression. His Fables are generally stale, and therefore excite no curiosity. Of his favourite, *The Two Springs*, the fiction is unnatural, and the moral inconsequential. In his Tales there is too much coarseness, with too little care of language, and not sufficient rapidity of narration.

His great work is his *Chace*, which he undertook in his maturer age, when his ear was improved to the approbation of blank verse, of which however his two first lines give a bad specimen. To this poem praise cannot be totally denied. He is allowed by sportsmen to write with great intelligence of his subject, which is the first requisite to excellence; and though it is impossible to interest the common readers of verse in the dangers or pleasures of the chace, he has done all that transition and variety could easily effect; and has with great propriety enlarged his plan by the modes of hunting used in other countries.

With still less judgement did he chuse blank verse as the vehicle of *Rural Sports*. If blank verse be not tumid and gorgeous, it is crippled prose;

prose; and familiar images in laboured language have nothing to recommend them but absurd novelty, which, wanting the attractions of Nature, cannot please long. One excellence of the *Splendid Shilling* is, that it is short. Disguise can gratify no longer than it deceives,

SAVAGE.

S A V A G E.

IT has been observed in all ages, that the advantages of nature or of fortune have contributed very little to the promotion of happiness; and that those whom the splendour of their rank, or the extent of their capacity, have placed upon the summit of human life, have not often given any just occasion to envy in those who look up to them from a lower station: whether it be that apparent superiority incites great designs, and great designs are naturally liable to fatal miscarriages; or that the general lot of mankind is misery, and the misfortunes of those, whose eminence drew upon them an universal attention, have been more carefully recorded, because they were more generally observed, and have in reality been
only,

only more conspicuous than those of others, not more frequent, or more severe.

That affluence and power, advantages extrinsic and adventitious, and therefore easily separable from those by whom they are possessed, should very often flatter the mind with expectations of felicity which they cannot give, raises no astonishment; but it seems rational to hope, that intellectual greatness should produce better effects; that minds qualified for great attainments should first endeavour their own benefit; and that they, who are most able to teach others the way to happiness, should with most certainty follow it themselves.

But this expectation, however plausible, has been very frequently disappointed. The heroes of literary as well as civil history have been very often no less remarkable for what they have suffered, than for what they have achieved; and volumes have been written only to enumerate the miseries of the learned, and relate their unhappy lives, and untimely deaths.

To these mournful narratives, I am about to add the Life of Richard Savage, a man whose writings entitle him to an eminent rank in the classes of learning, and whose misfortunes

tunes claim a degree of compassion, not always due to the unhappy, as they were often the consequences of the crimes of others, rather than his own.

In the year 1697, Anne Countess of Macclesfield, having lived some time upon very uneasy terms with her husband, thought a public confession of adultery the most obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty; and therefore declared, that the child, with which she was then great, was begotten by the Earl Rivers. This, as may be imagined, made her husband no less desirous of a separation than herself, and he prosecuted his design in the most effectual manner; for he applied not to the ecclesiastical courts for a divorce, but to the parliament for an act, by which his marriage might be dissolved, the nuptial contract annulled, and the children of his wife illegitimated. This act, after the usual deliberation, he obtained, though without the approbation of some, who considered marriage as an affair only cognizable by ecclesiastical judges*; and on March 3d was separated from

* This year was made remarkable by the dissolution of a marriage

from his wife, whose fortune, which was very great, was repaid her, and who having, as well as her husband, the liberty of making another choice, was in a short time married to Colonel Brett.

While the earl of Macclesfield was prosecuting this affair, his wife was, on the 10th of January 1697-8, delivered of a son; and the Earl Rivers, by appearing to consider him as his own, left none any reason to doubt of the sincerity of her declaration; for he was his godfather, and gave him his own name, which was by his direction inserted in the register of St. Andrew's parish in Holborn, but unfortunately left him to the care of his mother, whom, as she was now set free from her husband, he probably imagined likely to treat with great

marriage solemnized in the face of the church. SALMON'S REVIEW.

The following protest is registered in the books of the House of Lords.

Dissentient.

Because that we conceive that this is the first bill of that nature that hath passed, where there was not a divorce first obtained in the Spiritual Court; which we look upon as an ill precedent, and may be of dangerous consequence in the future.

HALIFAX.

ROCHESTER.

tenderneſs

tendernefs the child that had contributed to fo-
pleasing an event. It is not indeed eafy to dif-
cover what motives could be found to over-ba-
lance that natural affection of a parent, or
what intereft could be promoted by neglect or
cruelty. The dread of fhame or of poverty,
by which fome wretches have been incited to
abandon or to murder their children, cannot
be fupposed to have affected a woman who had
proclaimed her crimes and folicted reproach,
and on whom the clemency of the legiflature
had undeservedly beftowed a fortune, which
would have been very little diminished by the
expences which the care of her child could
have brought upon her. It was therefore not
likely that ſhe would be wicked without temp-
tation ; that ſhe would look upon her fon from
his birth with a kind of refentment and abhor-
rence ; and, inftead of fupporting, affifting,
and defending him, delight to fee him ſtrug-
gling with miſery, or that ſhe would take every
opportunity of aggravating his misfortunes, and
obſtructing his reſources, and with an impla-
cable and reſtleſs cruelty continue her perfec-
tion from the firſt hour of his life to the laſt.

But whatever were her motives, no sooner was her son born, than she discovered a resolution of disowning him; and in a very short time removed him from her sight, by committing him to the care of a poor woman, whom she directed to educate him as her own, and enjoined never to inform him of his true parents.

Such was the beginning of the life of Richard Savage. Born with a legal claim to honour and to affluence, he was in two months illegitimated by the parliament, and disowned by his mother, doomed to poverty and obscurity, and launched upon the ocean of life, only that he might be swallowed by its quicksands, or dashed upon its rocks.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the same cruelty. As it was impossible to avoid the inquiries which the curiosity or tenderness of her relations made after her child, she was obliged to give some account of the measures she had taken; and her Mother, the Lady Mason, whether in approbation of her design, or to prevent more criminal contrivances, engaged to transact with the nurse, to pay her for her

her care, and to superintend the education of the child.

In this charitable office she was assisted by his godmother Mrs. Lloyd, who, while she lived, always looked upon him with that tenderness which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly necessary, but her death, which happened in his tenth year, was another of the misfortunes of his childhood; for though she kindly endeavoured to alleviate his loss by a legacy of three hundred pounds; yet, as he had none to prosecute his claim, to shelter him from oppression, or call-in law to the assistance of justice, her will was eluded by the executors, and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was, however, not yet wholly abandoned. The Lady Mason still continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a small grammar-school near St. Alban's, where he was called by the name of his nurse, without the least intimation that he had a claim to any other.

Here he was initiated in literature, and passed through several of the classes, with what rapidity or with what applause cannot now be

known. As he always spoke with respect of his master, it is probable that the mean rank, in which he then appeared, did not hinder his genius from being distinguished, or his industry from being rewarded; and if in so low a state he obtained distinction and rewards, it is not likely that they were gained but by genius and industry.

It is very reasonable to conjecture, that his application was equal to his abilities, because his improvement was more than proportioned to the opportunities which he enjoyed; nor can it be doubted, that if his earliest productions had been preserved, like those of happier students, we might in some have found vigorous sallies of that sprightly humour which distinguishes *The Author to be let*, and in others strong touches of that imagination which painted the solemn scenes of *The Wanderer*.

While he was thus cultivating his genius, his father the Earl of Rivers was seized with a distemper, which in a short time put an end to his life*. He had frequently inquired after his son, and had always been amused with

* He died 18 Aug. 1712. E.

fallacious and evasive answers ; but, being now in his own opinion on his death-bed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a positive account of him, with an importunity not to be diverted or denied. His mother, who could no longer refuse an answer, determined at least to give such as should cut him off for ever from that happiness which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was dead ; which is perhaps the first instance of a lye invented by a mother to deprive her son of a provision which was designed him by another, and which she could not expect herself, though he should lose it.

This was therefore an act of wickedness which could not be defeated, because it could not be suspected ; the Earl did not imagine there could exist in a human form a mother that would ruin her son without enriching herself, and therefore bestowed upon some other person six thousand pounds, which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

The same cruelty which incited his mother to intercept this provision which had been intended him, prompted her in a short time to

another project, a project worthy of such a disposition. She endeavoured to rid herself from the danger of being at any time made known to him, by sending him secretly to the American plantations *.

By whose kindness this scheme was counteracted, or by whose interposition she was induced to lay aside her design, I know not; it is not improbable that the Lady Mason might persuade or compel her to desist, or perhaps she could not easily find accomplices wicked enough to concur in so cruel an action; for it may be conceived, that those who had by a long gradation of guilt hardened their hearts against the sense of common wickedness, would yet be shocked at the design of a mother to expose her son to slavery and want, to expose him without interest, and without provocation; and Savage might on this occasion find protectors and advocates among those who had long traded in crimes, and whom compassion had never touched before.

Being hindered, by whatever means, from banishing him into another country, she formed

* Savage's Preface to his Miscellany.

soon after a scheme for burying him in poverty and obscurity in his own ; and that his station of life, if not the place of his residence, might keep him for ever at a distance from her, she ordered him to be placed with a shoe-maker in Holborn, that, after the usual time of trial, he might become his apprentice *.

It is generally reported, that this project was for some time successful, and that Savage was employed at the awl longer than he was willing to confess ; nor was it perhaps any great advantage to him, that an unexpected discovery determined him to quit his occupation.

About this time his nurse, who had always treated him as her own son, died ; and it was natural for him to take care of those effects which by her death were, as he imagined, become his own : he therefore went to her house, opened her boxes, and examined her papers, among which he found some letters written to her by the Lady Mason, which informed him of his birth, and the reasons for which it was concealed.

* Savage's Preface to his Miscellany.

He was no longer satisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to share the affluence of his mother; and therefore without scruple applied to her as her son, and made use of every art to awaken her tenderness, and attract her regard. But neither his letters, nor the interposition of those friends which his merit or his distress procured him, made any impression upon her mind. She still resolved to neglect, though she could no longer disown him.

It was to no purpose that he frequently solicited her to admit him to see her; she avoided him with the most vigilant precaution, and ordered him to be excluded from her house, by whomsoever he might be introduced, and what reason soever he might give for entering it.

Savage was at the same time so touched with the discovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings * for several hours before her door, in hopes of seeing her as she might come by acci-

* See the Plain Dealer.

dent to the window, or crosses her apartment with a candle in her hand.

But all his assiduity and tenderness were without effect, for he could neither soften her heart, nor open her hand, and was reduced to the utmost miseries of want, while he was endeavouring to awaken the affection of a mother. He was therefore obliged to seek some other means of support; and, having no profession, became by necessity an author.

At this time the attention of the literary world was engrossed by the Bangorian controversy, which filled the press with pamphlets, and the coffee-houses with disputants. Of this subject, as most popular, he made choice for his first attempt, and, without any other knowledge of the question than he had casually collected from conversation, published a poem against the Bishop*.

What was the success or merit of this performance, I know not; it was probably lost among the innumerable pamphlets to which that dispute gave occasion. Mr. Savage was himself in a little time ashamed of it, and en-

* It was called "The Battle of the Pamphlets." E.

deavoured

deavoured to suppress it, by destroying all the copies that he could collect.

He then attempted a more gainful kind of writing *, and in his eighteenth year offered to the stage a comedy borrowed from a Spanish plot, which was refused by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more interest, made some slight alterations, and brought it upon the stage, under the title of † WOMAN'S A RIDDLE, but allowed the unhappy author no part of the profit.

Not discouraged however at his repulse, he wrote two years afterwards LOVE IN A VEIL, another comedy, borrowed likewise from the Spanish, but with little better success than before: though it was received and acted, yet it appeared so late in the year, that the author obtained no other advantage from it than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele, and Mr. Wilks, by whom he was pitied, caressed, and relieved.

* Jacob's Lives of the Dramatick Poets. Dr. J.

† This play was printed first in 8vo; and afterwards in 12mo, the fifth edition. Dr. J.

Sir Richard Steele, having declared in his favour with all the ardour of benevolence which constituted his character, promoted his interest with the utmost zeal, related his misfortunes, applauded his merit, took all the opportunities of recommending him, and asserted, that “the inhumanity of his mother had given him a right to find every good man his father *.”

Nor was Mr. Savage admitted to his acquaintance only, but to his confidence, of which he sometimes related an instance too extraordinary to be omitted, as it affords a very just idea of his patron's character.

He was once desired by Sir Richard, with an air of the utmost importance, to come very early to his house the next morning. Mr. Savage came as he had promised, found the chariot at the door, and Sir Richard waiting for him, and ready to go out. What was intended, and whither they were to go, Savage could not conjecture, and was not willing to enquire; but immediately seated himself with Sir Richard. The coachman was ordered to

* Plain Dealer.

drive,

drive, and they hurried with the utmost expedition to Hyde-Park Corner, where they stopped at a petty tavern, and retired to a private room. Sir Richard then informed him, that he intended to publish a pamphlet, and that he had desired him to come thither that he might write for him. He soon sat down to the work. Sir Richard dictated, and Savage wrote, till the dinner that had been ordered was put upon the table. Savage was surprized at the meanness of the entertainment, and after some hesitation ventured to ask for wine, which Sir Richard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finished their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon.

Mr. Savage then imagined his task over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning and return home : but his expectations deceived him, for Sir Richard told him, that he was without money, and that the pamphlet must be sold before the dinner could be paid for ; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to sale for two guineas, which with some difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home,
having

having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and composed the pamphlet only to discharge his reckoning.

Mr. Savage related another fact equally uncommon, which, though it has no relation to his life, ought to be preserved. Sir Richard Steele having one day invited to his house a great number of persons of the first quality, they were surpris'd at the number of liveries which furrounded the table; and after dinner, when wine and mirth had set them free from the observation of a rigid ceremony, one of them enquired of Sir Richard, how such an expensive train of domestics could be consistent with his fortune. Sir Richard very frankly confessed, that they were fellows of whom he would very willingly be rid. And being then asked, why he did not discharge them, declared that they were bailiffs, who had introduced themselves with an execution, and whom, since he could not send them away, he had thought it convenient to embellish with liveries, that they might do him credit while they staid.

His friends were diverted with the expedient, and by paying the debt discharged their attendance,

dance, having obliged Sir Richard to promise that they should never again find him graced with a retinue of the same kind.

Under such a tutor, Mr. Savage was not likely to learn prudence or frugality : and perhaps many of the misfortunes which the want of those virtues brought upon him in the following parts of his life, might be justly imputed to so unimproving an example.

Nor did the kindness of Sir Richard end in common favours. He proposed to have established him in some settled scheme of life, and to have contracted a kind of alliance with him, by marrying him to a natural daughter, on whom he intended to bestow a thousand pounds. But though he was always lavish of future bounties, he conducted his affairs in such a manner, that he was very seldom able to keep his promises, or execute his own intentions : and, as he was never able to raise the sum which he had offered, the marriage was delayed. In the mean time he was officiously informed, that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him ; by which he was so much exasperated, that he withdrew the allowance which he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his house.

It is not indeed unlikely that Savage might by his imprudence expose himself to the malice of a tale-bearer; for his patron had many follies, which, as his discernment easily discovered, his imagination might sometimes incite him to mention too ludicrously. A little knowledge of the world is sufficient to discover that such weakness is very common, and that there are few who do not sometimes, in the wantonness of thoughtless mirth, or the heat of transient resentment, speak of their friends and benefactors with levity and contempt, though in their cooler moments they want neither sense of their kindness, nor reverence for their virtue. The fault therefore of Mr. Savage was rather negligence than ingratitude; but Sir Richard must likewise be acquitted of severity, for who is there that can patiently bear contempt from one whom he has relieved and supported, whose establishment he has laboured, and whose interest he has promoted?

He was now again abandoned to fortune without any other friend than Mr. Wilks; a man, who, whatever were his abilities or skill as an actor, deserves at least to be remembered
for

for his virtues *, which are not often to be found in the world, and perhaps less often in his profession than in others. To be humane, generous, and candid, is a very high degree of merit in any case ; but those qualities deserve still greater praise when they are found

* As it is a loss to mankind when any good action is forgotten, I shall insert another instance of Mr. Wilks's generosity, very little known. Mr. Smith, a gentleman educated at Dublin, being hindered by an impediment in his pronunciation from engaging in orders, for which his friends designed him, left his own country, and came to London in quest of employment, but found his solicitations fruitless, and his necessities every day more pressing. In this distress he wrote a tragedy, and offered it to the players, by whom it was rejected. Thus were his last hopes defeated, and he had no other prospect than of the most deplorable poverty. But Mr. Wilks thought his performance, though not perfect, at least worthy of some reward, and therefore offered him a benefit. This favour he improved with so much diligence, that the house offered him a considerable sum, with which he went to Leyden, applied himself to the study of physick, and prosecuted his design with so much diligence and success, that when Dr. Boerhaave was desired by the Czarina to recommend proper persons to introduce into Russia the practice and study of physic, Dr. Smith was one of those whom he selected. He had a considerable pension settled on him at his arrival, and was one of the chief physicians at the Russian court. Dr. J.

A Letter from Dr. Smith in Russia to Mr. Wilks, is printed in Chetwood's History of the Stage. E.

in that condition, which makes almost every other man, for whatever reason, contemptuous, insolent, petulant, selfish, and brutal.

As Mr. Wilks was one of those to whom calamity seldom complained without relief, he naturally took an unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only assisted him in any casual distresses, but continued an equal and steady kindness to the time of his death.

By his interposition Mr. Savage once obtained from his mother * fifty pounds, and a promise of one hundred and fifty more; but it was the fate of this unhappy man, that few promises of any advantage to him were performed. His mother was infected among others with the general madness of the South Sea traffic; and, having been disappointed in her expectations, refused to pay what perhaps nothing but the prospect of sudden affluence prompted her to promise.

Being thus obliged to depend upon the friendship of Mr. Wilks, he was consequently an assiduous frequenter of the theatres; and in a

* This I write upon the credit of the author of his life, which was published 1727. Dr. J.

short time the amusements of the stage took such possession of his mind, that he never was absent from a play in several years.

This constant attendance naturally procured him the acquaintance of the players, and, among others, of Mrs. Oldfield, who was so much pleased with his conversation, and touched with his misfortunes, that she allowed him a settled pension of fifty pounds a year, which was during her life regularly paid.

That this act of generosity may receive its due praise, and that the good actions of Mrs. Oldfield may not be sullied by her general character, it is proper to mention that Mr. Savage often declared in the strongest terms, that he never saw her alone, or in any other place than behind the scenes.

At her death he endeavoured to shew his gratitude in the most decent manner, by wearing mourning as for a mother; but did not celebrate her in elegies*, because he knew that too great profusion of praise would only have revived those faults which his natural equity

* Chetwood, however, has printed a poem on her death, which he ascribes to Mr. Savage. See History of the Stage, p. 206. E.

did not allow him to think less, because they were committed by one who favoured him; but of which, though his virtue would not endeavour to palliate them, his gratitude would not suffer him to prolong the memory or diffuse the censure.

In his *Wanderer* he has indeed taken an opportunity of mentioning her; but celebrates her not for her virtue, but her beauty, an excellence which none ever denied her: this is the only encomium with which he has rewarded her liberality, and perhaps he has even in this been too lavish of his praise. He seems to have thought, that never to mention his benefactress would have an appearance of ingratitude, though to have dedicated any particular performance to her memory would have only betrayed an officious partiality, that, without exalting her character, would have depressed his own.

He had sometimes, by the kindness of Mr. Wilks, the advantage of a benefit, on which occasions he often received uncommon marks of regard and compassion; and was once told by the Duke of Dorset, that it was just to consider him as an injured nobleman, and that in

his opinion the nobility ought to think themselves obliged, without sollicitation, to take every opportunity of supporting him by their countenance and patronage. But he had generally the mortification to hear that the whole interest of his mother was employed to frustrate his applications, and that she never left any expedient untried, by which he might be cut off from the possibility of supporting life. The same disposition she endeavoured to diffuse among all those over whom nature or fortune gave her any influence, and indeed succeeded too well in her design ; but could not always propagate her effrontery with her cruelty, for some of those, whom she incited against him, were ashamed of their own conduct, and boasted of that relief which they never gave him.

In this censure I do not indiscriminately involve all his relations ; for he has mentioned with gratitude the humanity of one Lady, whose name I am now unable to recollect, and to whom therefore I cannot pay the praises which she deserves for having acted well in opposition to influence, precept, and example.

The punishment which our laws inflict upon those parents who murder their infants is well known,

known, nor has its justice ever been contested ; but if they deserve death who destroy a child in its birth, what pains can be severe enough for her who forbears to destroy him only to inflict sharper miseries upon him ; who prolongs his life only to make him miserable ; and who exposes him, without care and without pity, to the malice of oppression, the caprices of chance, and the temptations of poverty ; who rejoices to see him overwhelmed with calamities ; and, when his own industry, or the charity of others, has enabled him to rise for a short time above his miseries, plunges him again into his former distress ?

The kindness of his friends not affording him any constant supply, and the prospect of improving his fortune by enlarging his acquaintance necessarily leading him to places of expence, he found it necessary to * endeavour once more at dramatick poetry, for which he was now better qualified by a more extensive knowledge, and longer observation. But having been unsuccessful in comedy, though rather for want of opportunities than genius, he

* In 1723.

resolved now to try whether he should not be more fortunate in exhibiting a tragedy.

The story which he chose for the subject, was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a story well adapted to the stage, though perhaps not far enough removed from the present age, to admit properly the fictions necessary to complete the plan: for the mind, which naturally loves truth, is always most offended with the violation of those truths of which we are most certain; and we of course conceive those facts most certain, which approach nearest to our own time.

Out of this story he formed a tragedy, which, if the circumstances in which he wrote it be considered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of strength of genius, and evenness of mind, of a serenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be suppressed.

During a considerable part of the time in which he was employed upon this performance, he was without lodging and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniences for study than the fields or the streets allowed him; there he used to walk and form his speeches, and afterwards step into a shop, beg for a few moments

moments the use of the pen and ink, and write down what he had composed, upon paper which he had picked up by accident.

If the performance of a writer thus distressed is not perfect, its faults ought surely to be imputed to a cause very different from want of genius, and must rather excite pity than provoke censure.

But when under these discouragements the tragedy was finished, there yet remained the labour of introducing it on the stage, an undertaking, which, to an ingenuous mind, was in a very high degree vexatious and disgusting; for, having little interest or reputation, he was obliged to submit himself wholly to the players, and admit, with whatever reluctance, the emendations of Mr. Cibber, which he always considered as the disgrace of his performance.

He had indeed in Mr. Hill another critick of a very different class, from whose friendship he received great assistance on many occasions, and whom he never mentioned but with the utmost tenderness and regard. He had been for some time distinguished by him with very particular kindness, and on this occasion it was natural to apply to him as an author of an

established character. He therefore sent this tragedy to him, with a short copy of verses *, in which he desired his correction. Mr. Hill, whose humanity and politeness are generally known, readily complied with his request; but as he is remarkable for singularity of sentiment, and bold experiments in language, Mr. Savage did not think his play much improved by his innovation, and had even at that time the courage to reject several passages which he could not approve; and, what is still more laudable, Mr. Hill had the generosity not to resent the neglect of his alterations, but wrote the prologue and epilogue, in which he touches on the circumstances of the author with great tenderness.

After all these obstructions and compliances, he was only able to bring his play upon the stage in the summer, when the chief actors had retired, and the rest were in possession of the house for their own advantage. Among these, Mr. Savage was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury †, by which he gained

* They are printed in the present Collection.

† It was acted only three nights, the first was on June 12, 1723. When the house opened for the winter season it was once more performed, for the author's benefit, Oct 2. E.

no great reputation, the theatre being a province for which nature seemed not to have designed him ; for neither his voice, look, nor gesture, were such as were expected on the stage ; and he was so much ashamed of having been reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the list, when a copy of his tragedy was to be shown to his friends.

In the publication of his performance he was more successful, for the rays of genius that glimmered in it, that glimmered through all the mists which poverty and Cibber had been able to spread over it, procured him the notice and esteem of many persons eminent for their rank, their virtue and their wit.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicated, the accumulated profits arose to an hundred pounds, which he thought at that time a very large sum, having been never master of so much before.

In the dedication*, for which he received ten guineas, there is nothing remarkable. The Preface contains a very liberal encomium on

* To Herbert Tryst, Esq. of Herefordshire. Dr. J.

the blooming excellence of Mr. Theophilus Cibber, which Mr. Savage could not in the latter part of his life see his friends about to read without snatching the play out of their hands. The generosity of Mr. Hill did not end on this occasion; for afterwards, when Mr. Savage's necessities returned, he encouraged a subscription to a Miscellany of Poems in a very extraordinary manner, by publishing his story in the *Plain Dealer**, with some affecting lines, which he asserts to have been written by Mr. Savage upon the treatment received by him from his mother, but of which he was himself the author, as Mr. Savage afterwards declared. These lines, and the paper in which they were inserted, had a very powerful effect upon all but his mother, whom, by making her cruelty more public, they only hardened in her aversion.

Mr. Hill not only promoted the subscription to the Miscellany, but furnished likewise the

* The *Plain Dealer* was a periodical paper, written by Mr. Hill and Mr. Bond, whom Mr. Savage called the two contending powers of light and darkness. They wrote by turns each six Essays; and the character of the work was observed regularly to rise in Mr. Hill's weeks, and fall in Mr. Bond's. Dr. J.

greatest part of the Poems of which it is composed, and particularly *The Happy Man*, which he published as a specimen.

The subscriptions of those whom these papers should influence to patronize merit in distress, without any other sollicitation, were directed to be left at Button's coffee-house; and Mr. Savage going thither a few days afterwards, without expectation of any effect from his proposal, found to his surprise seventy guineas *, which had been sent him in consequence of the compassion excited by Mr. Hill's pathetic representation.

To this Miscellany he wrote a Preface, in which he gives an account of his mother's cruelty in a very uncommon strain of humour, and with a gaiety of imagination, which the success of his subscription probably produced.

* The names of those who so generously contributed to his relief, having been mentioned in a former account, ought not to be omitted here. They were the Dukes of Cleveland, Lady Cheyney, Lady Castlemain, Lady Gower, Lady Lechmere, the Dukes Dowager and Dukes of Rutland, Lady Strafford, the Countess Dowager of Warwick, Mrs. Mary Floyer, Mrs. Sofuel Noel, Duke of Rutland, Lord Gainsborough, Lord Milfington, Mr. John Savage. Dr. J.

The Dedication is addressed to the Lady Mary Wortley Montague, who n he flatters without reserve, and, to confess the truth, with very little art *. The same observation may be extended to all his Dedications: his compliments are constrained and violent, heaped together without the grace of order, or the decency of introduction: he seems to have written his panegyrics for the perusal only of his patrons, and to imagine that he had no other task than to pamper them with praises however gross, and that flattery would make its way to

* This the following extract from it will prove :

—“ Since our country has been honoured with the glory of your wit, as elevated and immortal as your soul, it no longer remains a doubt whether your sex have strength of mind in proportion to their sweetness. There is something in your verses as distinguished as your air.—They are as strong as truth, as deep as reason, as clear as innocence, and as smooth as beauty. —They contain a nameless and peculiar mixture of force and grace, which is at once so movingly serene, and so majestically lovely, that it is too amiable to appear any where but in your eyes and in your writings.

“ As fortune is not more my enemy than I am the enemy of of flattery, I know not how I can forbear this application to your Ladyship, because there is scarce a possibility that I should say more than I believe, when I am speaking of your Excellence.” Dr. J.

the

the heart, without the assistance of elegance or invention.

Soon afterwards, the death of the king furnished a general subject for a poetical contest, in which Mr. Savage engaged, and is allowed to have carried the prize of honour from his competitors: but I know not whether he gained by his performance any other advantage than the increase of his reputation; though it must certainly have been with farther views that he prevailed upon himself to attempt a species of writing, of which all the topics had been long before exhausted, and which was made at once difficult by the multitudes that had failed in it, and those that had succeeded.

He was now advancing in reputation, and though frequently involved in very distressful perplexities, appeared however to be gaining upon mankind, when both his fame and his life were endangered by an event, of which it is not yet determined, whether it ought to be mentioned as a crime or a calamity.

On the 20th of November, 1727, Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he then lodged, that he might pursue his studies without interruption, with an intent to discharge
another

another lodging which he had in Westminster; and accidentally meeting two gentlemen his acquaintances, whose names were Merchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring coffee-house, and sat drinking till it was late, it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any part of his character to be the first of the company that desired to separate. He would willingly have gone to bed in the same house; but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the streets, and divert themselves with such amusements as should offer themselves till morning.

In this walk they happened unluckily to discover a light in Robinson's coffee-house, near Charing-cross, and therefore went in. Merchant with some rudeness demanded a room, and was told that there was a good fire in the next parlour, which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Merchant, not satisfied with this answer, rushed into the room, and was followed by his companions. He then petulantly placed himself between the company and the fire, and soon after kicked down the table. This produced a quarrel,

quarrel, swords were drawn on both sides, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage, having likewise wounded a maid that held him, forced his way with Merchant out of the house; but being intimidated and confused, without resolution either to fly or stay, they were taken in a back-court by one of the company and some soldiers whom he had called to his assistance.

Being secured and guarded that night, they were in the morning carried before three justices, who committed them to the Gatehouse, from whence, upon the death of Mr. Sinclair, which happened in the same day, they were removed in the night to Newgate, where they were however treated with some distinction, exempted from the ignominy of chains, and confined, not among the common criminals, but in the Prefs-yard.

When the day of trial came, the court was crowded in a very unusual manner, and the public appeared to interest itself as in a cause of general concern. The witnesses against Mr. Savage and his friends were, the woman who kept the house, which was a house of ill fame, and her maid, the men who were in the room
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with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the town, who had been drinking with them, and with whom one of them had been seen in bed. They swore in general, that Merchant gave the provocation, which Savage and Gregory drew their swords to justify; that Savage drew first, and that he stabbed Sinclair when he was not in a posture of defence, or while Gregory commanded his sword; that after he had given the thrust he turned pale, and would have retired, but the maid clung round him, and one of the company endeavoured to detain him, from whom he broke, by cutting the maid on the head, but was afterwards taken in a court.

There was some difference in their deposition; one did not see Savage give the wound, another saw it given when Sinclair held his point towards the ground; and the woman of the town asserted, that she did not see Sinclair's sword at all: this difference however was very far from amounting to inconsistency; but it was sufficient to shew, that the hurry of the dispute was such, that it was not easy to discover the truth with relation to particular circumstances, and that therefore some deductions were to be made from the credibility of the testimonies.

Sinclair

Sinclair had declared several times before his death, that he received his wound from Savage; nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it, by urging the suddenness of the whole action, and the impossibility of an ill design, or premeditated malice, and partly to justify it by the necessity of self-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had lost that opportunity of giving the thrust: he observed, that neither reason nor law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatened, and which, if he should suffer it, he might never be able to return; that it was always allowable to prevent an assault, and to preserve life by taking away that of the adversary, by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured to escape, he declared, that it was not his design to fly from justice or decline a trial, but to avoid the expences and severities of a prison; and that he intended to have appeared at the bar without compulsion.

This defence, which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court with the most attentive and respectful silence: those who thought he ought not to be

acquitted, owned that applause could not be refused him ; and those who before pitied his misfortunes, now revered his abilities.

The witnesses which appeared against him were proved to be persons of characters which did not entitle them to much credit; a common strumpet, a woman by whom strumpets were entertained, and a man by whom they were supported, and the character of Savage was by several persons of distinction asserted to be that of a modest inoffensive man, not inclined to broils or to insolence, and who had, to that time, been only known for his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges, he had undoubtedly been acquitted ; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with his usual insolence and severity, and when he had summed up the evidence, endeavoured to exasperate the jury, as Mr. Savage used to relate it, with this eloquent harangue :

‘ Gentlemen of the jury, you are to consider
‘ that Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much
‘ greater man than you or I, gentlemen of the
‘ jury ; that he wears very fine clothes, much
‘ finer clothes than you or I, gentlemen of the
‘ jury ;

‘ jury ; that he has abundance of money in his
‘ pocket, much more money than you or I,
‘ gentlemen of the jury ; but, gentlemen of
‘ the jury, is it not a very hard case, gentlemen
‘ of the jury, that Mr. Savage should therefore
‘ kill you or me, gentlemen of the jury ?’

Mr. Savage, hearing his defence thus misrepresented, and the men who were to decide his fate incited against him by invidious comparisons, resolutely asserted, that his cause was not candidly explained, and began to recapitulate what he had before said with regard to his condition, and the necessity of endeavouring to escape the expences of imprisonment ; but the judge having ordered him to be silent, and repeated his orders without effect, commanded that he should be taken from the bar by force.

The jury then heard the opinion of the judge, that good characters were of no weight against positive evidence, though they might turn the scale where it was doubtful ; and that though, when two men attack each other, the death of either is only manslaughter ; but where one is the aggressor, as in the case before them, and, in pursuance of his first attack kills the other, the law supposes the action, however sudden,

sudden, to be malicious. They then deliberated upon their verdict, and determined that Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder; and Mr. Merchant, who had no sword, only of manslaughter.

Thus ended this memorable trial, which lasted eight hours. Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to prison, where they were more closely confined, and loaded with irons of fifty pounds weight: four days afterwards they were sent back to the court to receive sentence; on which occasion Mr. Savage made, as far as it could be retained in memory, the following speech:

“ It is now, my Lord, too late to offer any
“ thing by way of defence or vindication; nor
“ can we expect from your Lordships, in this
“ court, but the sentence which the law re-
“ quires you, as judges, to pronounce against
“ men of our calamitous condition.—But we
“ are also persuaded, that as mere men, and cut
“ of this feat of rigorous justice, you are sus-
“ ceptive of the tender passions, and too hu-
“ mane not to commiserate the unhappy situa-
“ tion of those, whom the law sometimes per-
“ haps—exact—s—from you to pronounce upon.
“ No

“ No doubt you distinguish between offences
“ which arise out of premeditation, and a dis-
“ position habituated to vice or immorality,
“ and transgressions which are the unhappy
“ and unforeseen effects of casual absence of
“ reason, and sudden impulse of passion: we
“ therefore hope you will contribute all you can
“ to an extension of that mercy, which the gen-
“ tlemen of the jury have been pleased to shew
“ Mr. Merchant, who (allowing facts as sworn
“ against us by the evidence) has led us into
“ this our calamity. I hope this will not be
“ as if we meant to reflect upon that gentleman,
“ or remove any thing from us upon him, or
“ that we repine the more at our fate, because
“ he has no participation of it: No, my Lord!
“ For my part, I declare nothing could more
“ soften my grief, than to be without any com-
“ panion in so great a misfortune *.”

Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life, but from the mercy of the crown, which was very earnestly solicited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the story may obtain belief, was obstructed only by his mother.

* Mr. Savage's Life.

To prejudice the Queen against him, she made use of an incident, which was omitted in the order of time, that it might be mentioned together with the purpose which it was made to serve. Mr. Savage, when he had discovered his birth, had an incessant desire to speak to his mother, who always avoided him in publick, and refused him admission into her house. One evening walking, as it was his custom, in the street that she inhabited, he saw the door of her house by accident open ; he entered it, and, finding no person in the passage to hinder him, went up stairs to salute her. She discovered him before he entered her chamber, alarmed the family with the most distressful outcries, and when she had by her screams gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the house that villain, who had forced himself in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the most submissive tenderness to soften her rage, hearing her utter so detestable an accusation, thought it prudent to retire ; and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to speak to her.

But, shocked as he was with her falsehood and her cruelty, he imagined that she intended

no other use of her lye, than to set herself free from his embraces and solicitations, and was very far from suspecting that she would treasure it in her memory, as an instrument of future wickedness, or that she would endeavour for this fictitious assault to deprive him of his life.

But when the Queen was solicited for his pardon, and informed of the severe treatment which he had suffered from his judge, she answered, that, however unjustifiable might be the manner of his trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, she could not think that man a proper object of the King's mercy, who had been capable of entering his mother's house in the night, with an intent to murder her.

By whom this atrocious calumny had been transmitted to the Queen; whether she that invented had the front to relate it; whether she found any one weak enough to credit it, or corrupt enough to concur with her in her hateful design, I know not: but methods had been taken to persuade the Queen so strongly of the truth of it, that she for a long time refused to hear any one of those who petitioned for his life.

Thus had Savage perished by the evidence of a bawd, a strumpet, and his mother, had not justice and compassion procured him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit and his calamities happened to reach the ear of the Countess of Hertford, who engaged in his support with all the tenderness that is excited by pity, and all the zeal which is kindled by generosity; and, demanding an audience of the Queen, laid before her the whole series of his mother's cruelty, exposed the improbability of an accusation by which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and soon convinced her how little his former conduct could deserve to be mentioned as a reason for extraordinary severity.

The interposition of this Lady was so successful, that he was soon after admitted to bail, and, on the 9th of March, 1728, pleaded the King's pardon.

It is natural to enquire upon what motives his mother could persecute him in a manner so outrageous and implacable; for what reason she could employ all the arts of malice, and all the
the

the snares of calumny, to take away the life of her own son, of a son who never injured her, who was never supported by her expence, nor obstructed any prospect of pleasure or advantage : why she should endeavour to destroy him by a lye—a lye which could not gain credit, but must vanish of itself at the first moment of examination, and of which only this can be said to make it probable, that it may be observed from her conduct, that the most execrable crimes are sometimes committed without apparent temptation.

This mother is still alive *, and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was so often defeated, enjoy the pleasure of reflecting, that the life, which she often endeavoured to destroy, was at last shortened by her maternal offices ; that though she could not transport her son to the plantations, bury him in the shop of a mechanic, or hasten the hand of the public executioner, she has yet had the satisfaction of imbittering all his hours, and forcing him into exigences that hurried on his death.

* She died Oct. 11, 1753, at her house in Old Bond Street, aged above fourscore. E.

It is by no means necessary to aggravate the enormity of this woman's conduct, by placing it in opposition to that of the Countess of Hertford; no one can fail to observe how much more amiable it is to relieve than to oppress, and to rescue innocence from destruction, than to destroy without an injury.

Mr. Savage, during his imprisonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under sentence of death, behaved with great firmness and equality of mind, and confirmed by his fortitude the esteem of those who before admired him for his abilities *. The peculiar circumstances of his life were made more generally known by a short account †, which was then published, and of which several thou-

* It appears that during his confinement he wrote a letter to his mother, which he sent to Theophilus Cibber, that it might be transmitted to her through the means of Mr. Wilks. In his Letter to Cibber he says—"as to death, I am easy, and dare meet it like a man—all that touches me is the concern of my friends, and a reconciliation with my mother—I cannot express the agony I felt when I wrote the Letter to her—if you can find any decent excuse for shewing it to Mrs Oldfield, do; for I would have all my friends (and that admirable lady in particular) be satisfied I have done my duty towards it—Dr. Young to-day sent me a letter, most passionately kind. E.

† Written by Mr. Beckingham and another gentleman. Dr. J. sands

sands were in a few weeks dispersed over the nation: and the compassion of mankind operated so powerfully in his favour, that he was enabled by frequent presents, not only to support himself, but to assist Mr. Gregory in prison; and when he was pardoned and released, he found the number of his friends not lessened.

The nature of the act for which he had been tried was in itself doubtful; of the evidences which appeared against him, the character of the man was not unexceptionable, that of the women notoriously infamous; she, whose testimony chiefly influenced the jury to condemn him, afterwards retracted her assertions. He always himself denied that he was drunk, as had been generally reported. Mr. Gregory, who is now (1744) Collector of Antigua, is said to declare him far less criminal than he was imagined, even by some who favoured him; and Page himself afterwards confessed, that he had treated him with uncommon rigour. When all these particulars are rated together, perhaps the memory of Savage may not be much sullied by his trial.

Some time after he obtained his liberty, he
met

met in the street the woman that had sworn with so much malignity against him. She informed him, that she was in distress, and, with a degree of confidence not easily attainable, desired him to relieve her. He, instead of insulting her misery, and taking pleasure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury; and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himself.

This is an action which in some ages would have made a saint, and perhaps in others a hero, and which, without any hyperbolical encomiums, must be allowed to be an instance of uncommon generosity, an act of complicated virtue; by which he at once relieved the poor, corrected the vicious, and forgave an enemy; by which he at once remitted the strongest provocations, and exercised the most ardent charity.

Compassion was indeed the distinguishing quality of Savage; he never appeared inclined to take advantage of weakness, to attack the defenceless, or to press upon the falling: whoever was distressed was certain at least of his
good

good wishes ; and when he could give no assistance to extricate them from misfortunes, he endeavoured to soothe them by sympathy and tenderness.

But when his heart was not softened by the sight of misery, he was sometimes obstinate in his resentment, and did not quickly lose the remembrance of an injury. He always continued to speak with anger of the insolence and partiality of Page, and a short time before his death revenged it by a satire *.

It is natural to enquire in what terms Mr. Savage spoke of this fatal action, when the danger was over, and he was under no necessity of using any art to set his conduct in the fairest light. He was not willing to dwell upon it; and, if he transiently mentioned it, appeared neither to consider himself as a murderer, nor as a man wholly free from the guilt of blood †. How much and how long he regretted it, appeared in a poem which he published many years afterwards. On occasion of a copy of verses, in which the failings of good

* Printed in the present collection.

† In one of his letters he styles it "a fatal quarrel, but too well known." Dr. J.

men were recounted, and in which the author had endeavoured to illustrate his position, that “the best may sometimes deviate from virtue,” by an instance of murder committed by Savage in the heat of wine, Savage remarked, that it was no very just representation of a good man, to suppose him liable to drunkenness, and disposed in his riots to cut throats.

He was now indeed at liberty, but was, as before, without any other support than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him; sources by which he was sometimes very liberally supplied, and which at other times were suddenly stopped; so that he spent his life between want and plenty; or, what was yet worse, between beggary and extravagance; for as whatever he received was the gift of chance, which might as well favour him at one time as another, he was tempted to squander what he had, because he always hoped to be immediately supplied.

Another cause of his profusion was the absurd kindness of his friends, who at once rewarded and enjoyed his abilities, by treating him at taverns, and habituating him to pleasures which he could not afford to enjoy, and
which

which he was not able to deny himself, though he purchased the luxury of a single night by the anguish of cold and hunger for a week.

The experience of these inconveniences determined him to endeavour after some settled income, which, having long found submission and intreaties fruitless, he attempted to extort from his mother by rougher methods. He had now, as he acknowledged, lost that tenderness for her, which the whole series of her cruelty had not been able wholly to repress, till he found, by the efforts which she made for his destruction, that she was not content with refusing to assist him, and being neutral in his struggles with poverty, but was as ready to snatch every opportunity of adding to his misfortunes, and that she was now to be considered as an enemy implacably malicious, whom nothing but his blood could satisfy. He therefore threatened to harass her with lampoons, and to publish a copious narrative of her conduct, unless she consented to purchase an exemption from infamy, by allowing him a pension.

This expedient proved successful. Whether shame still survived, though virtue was extinct,
or

or whether her relations had more delicacy than herself, and imagined that some of the darts which satire might point at her would glance upon them ; Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promise to lay aside his design of exposing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a pension of two hundred pounds a year.

This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life ; and for some time he had no reason to complain of fortune ; his appearance was splendid, his expences large, and his acquaintance extensive. He was courted by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and caressed by all who valued themselves upon a refined taste. To admire Mr. Savage, was a proof of discernment ; and to be acquainted with him, was a title to poetical reputation. His presence was sufficient to make any place of publick entertainment popular ; and his approbation and example constituted the fashion. So powerful is genius, when it is invested with the glitter of affluence ! Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleased when they have an opportunity
at

at once of gratifying their vanity, and practising their duty.

This interval of prosperity furnished him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its highest gradations to its lowest; and, had he afterwards applied to dramatick poetry, he would perhaps not have had many superiors; for as he never suffered any scene to pass before his eyes without notice, he had treasured in his mind all the different combinations of passions, and the innumerable mixtures of vice and virtue, which distinguish one character from another; and as his conception was strong, his expressions were clear, he easily received impressions from objects, and very forcibly transmitted them to others.

Of his exact observations on human life he has left a proof, which would do honour to the greatest names, in a small pamphlet, called, *The Author to be let* *, where he introduces Iscariot Hackney, a prostitute scribbler, giving an account of his birth, his education, his disposition and morals, habits of life, and maxims of

* Printed in his Works, vol. II. p. 231.

conduct. In the introduction are related many secret histories of the petty writers of that time, but sometimes mixed with ungenerous reflections on their birth, their circumstances; or those of their relations; nor can it be denied, that some passages are such as Iscariot Hackney might himself have produced.

He was accused likewise of living in an appearance of friendship with some whom he satirised, and of making use of the confidence which he gained by a seeming kindness to discover failings and expose them: it must be confessed, that Mr. Savage's esteem was no very certain possession, and that he would lampoon at one time those whom he had praised at another.

It may be alledged, that the same man may change his principles; and that he, who was once deservedly commended, may be afterwards satirised with equal justice, or that the poet was dazzled with the appearance of virtue, and found the man whom he had celebrated, when he had an opportunity of examining him more narrowly, unworthy of the panegyrick which he had too hastily bestowed; and that, as a false satire ought to be recanted, for the sake
of

of him whose reputation may be injured, false praise ought likewise to be obviated, lest the distinction between vice and virtue should be lost, lest a bad man should be trusted upon the credit of his encomiast, or lest others should endeavour to obtain the like praises by the same means.

But though these excuses may be often plausible, and sometimes just, they are very seldom satisfactory to mankind; and the writer, who is not constant to his subject, quickly sinks into contempt, his satire loses its force, and his panegyrick its value, and he is only considered at one time as a flatterer, and as a calumniator at another.

To avoid these imputations, it is only necessary to follow the rules of virtue, and to preserve an unvaried regard to truth. For though it is undoubtedly possible that a man, however cautious, may be sometimes deceived by an artful appearance of virtue, or by false evidences of guilt, such errors will not be frequent; and it will be allowed, that the name of an author would never have been made contemptible, had no man ever said what he did

not think, or misled others but when he was himself deceived.

The Author to be let was first published in a single pamphlet, and afterwards inserted in a collection of pieces relating to the Dunciad, which were addressed by Mr. Savage to the Earl of Middlesex, in a * dedication which he was prevailed upon to sign, though he did not write it, and in which there are some positions, that the true author would perhaps not have published under his own name, and on which Mr. Savage afterwards reflected with no great satisfaction; the enumeration of the bad effects of the uncontrouled freedom of the press, and the assertion that the "liberties taken by the "writers of Journals with their superiors were "exorbitant and unjustifiable," very ill became men, who have themselves not always shewn the exactest regard to the laws of subordination in their writings, and who have often satirised those that at least thought themselves their superiors, as they were eminent for their hereditary rank, and employed in the highest offices of the kingdom. But this is only an

* See his Works, vol. II. p. 233.

instance of that partiality which almost every man indulges with regard to himself: the liberty of the press is a blessing when we are inclined to write against others, and a calamity when we find ourselves overborne by the multitude of our assailants; as the power of the crown is always thought too great by those who suffer by its influence, and too little by those in whose favour it is exerted; and a standing army is generally accounted necessary by those who command, and dangerous and oppressive by those who support it.

Mr. Savage was likewise very far from believing, that the letters annexed to each species of bad poets in the Bathos were, as he was directed to assert, "set down at random;" for when he was charged by one of his friends with putting his name to such an improbability, he had no other answer to make, than that "he did not think of it;" and his friend had too much tenderness to reply, that next to the crime of writing contrary to what he thought, was that of writing without thinking.

After having remarked what is false in this dedication, it is proper that I observe the impartiality which I recommend, by declaring

what Savage asserted, that the account of the circumstances which attended the publication of the *Dunciad*, however strange and improbable, was exactly true.

The publication of this piece at this time raised Mr. Savage a great number of enemies among those that were attacked by Mr. Pope, with whom he was considered as a kind of confederate, and whom he was suspected of supplying with private intelligence and secret incidents : so that the ignominy of an informer was added to the terror of a satirist.

That he was not altogether free from literary hypocrisy, and that he sometimes spoke one thing, and wrote another, cannot be denied ; because he himself confessed, that, when he lived in great familiarity with Dennis, he wrote an epigram * against him.

* This epigram was, I believe, never published.

“ Should Dennis publish you had stabb’d your brother,
Lampoon’d your monarch, or debauch’d your mother ;
Say, what revenge on Dennis can be had,
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad ?
On one so poor you cannot take the law,
On one so old your sword you scorn to draw.
Uncag’d, then let the harmless monster rage,
Secure in dulness, madness, want, and age.”

Dr. J.

Mr.

Mr. Savage however set all the malice of all the pigmy writers at defiance, and thought the friendship of Mr. Pope cheaply purchased by being exposed to their censure and their hatred; nor had he any reason to repent of the preference, for he found Mr. Pope a steady and unalienable friend almost to the end of his life.

About this time, notwithstanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he published a panegyrick on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with twenty guineas, a sum not very large, if either the excellence of the performance, or the affluence of the patron, be considered; but greater than he afterwards obtained from a person of yet higher rank, and more desirous in appearance of being distinguished as a patron of literature.

As he was very far from approving the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and in conversation mentioned him sometimes with acrimony, and generally with contempt; as he was one of those who were always zealous in their assertions of the justice of the late opposition, jealous of the rights of the people, and alarmed by the long-continued triumph of the court; it was natural to ask him what could induce

him to employ his poetry in praise of that man who was, in his opinion, an enemy to liberty, and an oppressor of his country? He alledged, that he was then dependent upon the Lord Tyrconnel, who was an implicit follower of the ministry; and that being enjoined by him, not without menaces, to write in praise of his leader, he had not resolution sufficient to sacrifice the pleasure of affluence to that of integrity.

On this, and on many occasions, he was ready to lament the misery of living at the tables of other men, which was his fate from the beginning to the end of his life; for I know not whether he ever had, for three months together, a settled habitation, in which he could claim a right of residence.

To this unhappy state it is just to impute much of the inconstancy of his conduct; for though a readiness to comply with the inclination of others was no part of his natural character, yet he was sometimes obliged to relax his obstinacy, and submit his own judgement, and even his virtue, to the government of those by whom he was supported: so that, if his miseries were sometimes the consequences of his faults,

faults, he ought not yet to be wholly excluded from compassion, because his faults were very often the effects of his misfortunes.

In this gay period * of his life, while he was surrounded by affluence and pleasure, he published *The Wanderer*, a moral poem, of which the design is comprised in these lines :

I fly all public care, all venal strife,
To try the still compar'd with active life ;
To prove, by these, the sons of men may owe
The fruits of bliss to bursting clouds of woe ;
That ev'n calamity, by thought refin'd,
Inspirits and adorns the thinking mind.

And more distinctly in the following passage :

By woe, the soul to daring action swells ;
By woe, in plaintless patience it excels ;
From patience prudent, clear experience springs,
And traces knowledge through the course of
things !

Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, success,
Renown :—whate'er men covet and carefs.

This performance was always considered by himself as his master-piece ; and Mr. Pope,

when he asked his opinion of it, told him, that he read it once over, and was not displeased with it, that it gave him more pleasure at the second perusal, and delighted him still more at the third.

It has been generally objected to *The Wanderer*, that the disposition of the parts is irregular; that the design is obscure, and the plan perplexed; that the images, however beautiful, succeed each other without order; and that the whole performance is not so much a regular fabrick, as a heap of shining materials thrown together by accident, which strikes rather with the solemn magnificence of a stupendous ruin, than the elegant grandeur of a finished pile.

This criticism is universal, and therefore it is reasonable to believe it at least in a great degree just; but Mr. Savage was always of a contrary opinion, and thought his drift could only be missed by negligence or stupidity, and that the whole plan was regular, and the parts distinct.

It was never denied to abound with strong representations of nature, and just observations upon life; and it may easily be observed, that most of his pictures have an evident tendency to

to illustrate his first great position, "that good
"is the consequence of evil." The sun that
burns up the mountains, fructifies the vales;
the deluge that rushes down the broken rocks
with dreadful impetuosity, is separated into
purling brooks; and the rage of the hurricane
purifies the air.

Even in this poem he has not been able to
forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mo-
ther, which, though remarkably delicate and
tender, is a proof how deep an impression it
had upon his mind.

This must be at least acknowledged, which
ought to be thought equivalent to many other
excellences, that this poem can promote no
other purposes than those of virtue, and that
it is written with a very strong sense of the ef-
ficacy of religion.

But my province is rather to give the history
of Mr. Savage's performances, than to display
their beauties, or to obviate the criticisms which
they have occasioned; and therefore I shall not
dwell upon the particular passages which de-
serve applause: I shall neither shew the excel-
lence of his descriptions, nor expatiate on the
terrifick portrait of suicide, nor point out the
artful

artful touches, by which he has distinguished the intellectual features of the rebels, who suffer death in his last canto. It is, however, proper to observe, that Mr. Savage always declared the characters wholly fictitious, and without the least allusion to any real persons or actions.

From a poem so diligently laboured, and so successfully finished, it might be reasonably expected that he should have gained considerable advantage; nor can it, without some degree of indignation and concern, be told, that he sold the copy for ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two last sheets of the work might be reprinted, of which he had in his absence intrusted the correction to a friend, who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

A superstitious regard to the correction of his sheets was one of Mr. Savage's peculiarities: he often altered, revised, recurred to his first reading or punctuation, and again adopted the alteration; he was dubious and irresolute without end, as on a question of the last importance, and at last was seldom satisfied: the intrusion or omission of a comma was sufficient
to

to discompose him, and he would lament an error of a single letter as a heavy calamity. In one of his letters relating to an impression of some verses, he remarks, that he had, with regard to the correction of the proof, "a spell upon him;" and indeed the anxiety with which he dwelt upon the minutest and most trifling niceties, deserved no other name than that of fascination.

That he sold so valuable a performance for so small a price, was not to be imputed either to necessity, by which the learned and ingenious are often obliged to submit to very hard conditions; or to avarice, by which the booksellers are frequently incited to oppress that genius by which they are supported; but to that intemperate desire of pleasure, and habitual slavery to his passions, which involved him in many perplexities. He happened at that time to be engaged in the pursuit of some trifling gratification, and, being without money for the present occasion, sold his poem to the first bidder, and perhaps for the first price that was proposed, and would probably have been content with less, if less had been offered him.

This

This poem was addressed to the Lord Tyrconnel, not only in the first lines, but in a formal dedication filled with the highest strains of panegyrick, and the warmest professions of gratitude, but by no means remarkable for delicacy of connexion or elegance of style.

These praises in a short time he found himself inclined to retract, being discarded by the man on whom he had bestowed them, and whom he then immediately discovered not to have deserved them. Of this quarrel, which every day made more bitter, Lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage assigned very different reasons, which might perhaps all in reality concur, though they were not all convenient to be alleged by either party. Lord Tyrconnel affirmed, that it was the constant practice of Mr. Savage to enter a tavern with any company that proposed it, drink the most expensive wines with great profusion, and when the reckoning was demanded, to be without money: if, as it often happened, his company were willing to defray his part, the affair ended, without any ill consequences; but, if they were refractory, and expected that the wine should be paid for by him that drank it, his method of composition

tion was, to take them with him to his own apartment, assume the government of the house, and order the butler in an imperious manner to set the best wine in the cellar before his company, who often drank till they forgot the respect due to the house in which they were entertained, indulged themselves in the utmost extravagance of merriment, practised the most licentious frolics, and committed all the outrages of drunkenness.

Nor was this the only charge which Lord Tyrconnel brought against him: Having given him a collection of valuable books, stamped with his own arms, he had the mortification to see them in a short time exposed to sale upon the stalls, it being usual with Mr. Savage, when he wanted a small sum, to take his books to the pawnbroker.

Whoever was acquainted with Mr. Savage easily credited both these accusations: for, having been obliged, from his first entrance into the world, to subsist upon expedients, affluence was not able to exalt him above them; and so much was he delighted with wine and conversation, and so long had he been accustomed to live by chance, that he would at any time go
to

to the tavern without scruple, and trust for the reckoning to the liberality of his company, and frequently of company to whom he was very little known. This conduct indeed very seldom drew upon him those inconveniences that might be feared by any other person; for his conversation was so entertaining, and his address so pleasing, that few thought the pleasure which they received from him dearly purchased, by paying for his wine. It was his peculiar happiness, that he scarcely ever found a stranger, whom he did not leave a friend; but it must likewise be added, that he had not often a friend long, without obliging him to become a stranger.

Mr. Savage, on the other hand, declared, that Lord Tyrconnel* quarrelled with him, because he would not subtract from his own luxury and extravagance what he had promised to allow him, and that his resentment was only a plea for the violation of his promise. He asserted, that he had done nothing that ought to exclude him from that subsistence which he

* His expression in one of his letters was, "that Lord Tyrconnel had involved his estate, and therefore poorly sought an occasion to quarrel with him,"

Dr. J.

thought

thought not so much a favour, as a debt, since it was offered him upon conditions which he had never broken; and that his only fault was, that he could not be supported with nothing.

He acknowledged, that Lord Tyrconnel often exhorted him to regulate his method of life, and not to spend all his nights in taverns, and that he appeared desirous that he would pass those hours with him, which he so freely bestowed upon others. This demand Mr. Savage considered as a censure of his conduct, which he could never patiently bear, and which, in the latter and cooler parts of his life, was so offensive to him, that he declared it as his resolution, “to spurn that friend who should presume to dictate to him;” and it is not likely, that in his earlier years he received admonitions with more calmness.

He was likewise inclined to resent such expectations, as tending to infringe his liberty, of which he was very jealous, when it was necessary to the gratification of his passions; and declared, that the request was still more unreasonable, as the company to which he was to have been confined was insupportably

disagreeable. This assertion affords another instance of that inconsistency of his writings with his conversation, which was so often to be observed. He forgot how lavishly he had, in his Dedication to *The Wanderer*, extolled the delicacy and penetration, the humanity and generosity, the candour and politeness of the man, whom, when he no longer loved him, he declared to be a wretch without understanding, without good-nature, and without justice; of whose name he thought himself obliged to leave no trace in any future edition of his writings; and accordingly blotted it out of that copy of *The Wanderer* which was in his hands.

During his continuance with the Lord Tyrconnel, he wrote *The Triumph of Health and Mirth*, on the recovery of Lady Tyrconnel from a languishing illness. This performance is remarkable, not only for the gaiety of the ideas, and the melody of the numbers, but for the agreeable fiction upon which it is formed. Mirth, overwhelmed with sorrow for the sickness of her favourite, takes a flight in quest of her sister Health, whom she finds reclined upon the brow of a lofty mountain,
amidst

amidst the fragrance of perpetual spring, with the breezes of the morning sporting about her. Being solicited by her sister Mirth, she readily promises her assistance, flies away in a cloud, and impregnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, by which the sickness of Belinda is relieved.

As the reputation of his abilities, the particular circumstances of his birth and life, the splendour of his appearance, and the distinction which was for some time paid him by Lord Tyrconnel, intitled him to familiarity with persons of higher rank than those to whose conversation he had been before admitted; he did not fail to gratify that curiosity, which induced him to take a nearer view of those whom their birth, their employments, or their fortunes, necessarily place at a distance from the greatest part of mankind, and to examine whether their merit was magnified or diminished by the medium through which it was contemplated; whether the splendour with which they dazzled their admirers was inherent in themselves, or only reflected on them by the objects that surrounded them; and whether

great men were selected for high stations, or high stations made great men.

For this purpose he took all opportunities of conversing familiarly with those who were most conspicuous at that time for their power or their influence; he watched their looser moments, and examined their domestick behaviour, with that acuteness which nature had given him, and which the uncommon variety of his life had contributed to increase, and that inquisitiveness which must always be produced in a vigorous mind, by an absolute freedom from all pressing or domestick engagements.

His discernment was quick, and therefore he soon found in every person, and in every affair, something that deserved attention; he was supported by others, without any care for himself, and was therefore at leisure to pursue his observations.

More circumstances to constitute a critick on human life could not easily concur; nor indeed could any man, who assumed from accidental advantages more praise than he could justly claim from his real merit, admit any acquaintance more dangerous than that of Savage; of whom likewise it must be confessed, that abilities

ties really exalted above the common level, or virtue refined from passion, or proof against corruption, could not easily find an abler judge, or a warmer advocate.

What was the result of Mr. Savage's enquiry, though he was not much accustomed to conceal his discoveries, it may not be entirely safe to relate, because the persons whose characters he criticised are powerful; and power and resentment are seldom strangers; nor would it perhaps be wholly just, because what he asserted in conversation might, though true in general, be heightened by some momentary ardour of imagination, and, as it can be delivered only from memory, may be imperfectly represented; so that the picture at first aggravated, and then unskilfully copied, may be justly suspected to retain no great resemblance of the original.

It may however be observed, that he did not appear to have formed very elevated ideas of those to whom the administration of affairs, or the conduct of parties, has been intrusted; who have been considered as the advocates of the crown, or the guardians of the people; and who have obtained the most implicit confidence, and the loudest applauses. Of one

particular person, who has been at one time so popular as to be generally esteemed, and at another so formidable as to be universally detested, he observed, that his acquisitions had been small, or that his capacity was narrow, and that the whole range of his mind was from obscenity to politicks, and from politicks to obscenity.

But the opportunity of indulging his speculations on great characters was now at an end. He was banished from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without prospect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the virtues by which he was distinguished, he had made no provision against a misfortune like this. And though it is not to be imagined but that the separation must for some time have been preceded by coldness, peevishness, or neglect, though it was undoubtedly the consequence of accumulated provocations on both sides; yet every one that knew Savage will readily believe, that to him it was sudden as a stroke of thunder; that, though he might have transiently suspected it, he had never suffered any thought so unpleasant to sink into his mind,
but

but that he had driven it away by amusements, or dreams of future felicity and affluence, and had never taken any measures by which he might prevent a precipitation from plenty to indigence.

This quarrel and separation, and the difficulties to which Mr. Savage was exposed by them, were soon known both to his friends and enemies; nor was it long before he perceived, from the behaviour of both, how much is added to the lustre of genius by the ornaments of wealth.

His condition did not appear to excite much compassion; for he had not always been careful to use the advantages he enjoyed with that moderation which ought to have been with more than usual caution preserved by him, who knew, if he had reflected, that he was only a dependant on the bounty of another, whom he could expect to support him no longer than he endeavoured to preserve his favour by complying with his inclinations, and whom he nevertheless set at defiance, and was continually irritating by negligence or encroachments.

Examples need not be fought at any great distance to prove, that superiority of fortune has a natural tendency to kindle pride, and that pride seldom fails to exert itself in contempt and insult; and if this is often the effect of hereditary wealth, and of honours enjoyed only by the merits of others, it is some extenuation of any indecent triumphs to which this unhappy man may have been betrayed, that his prosperity was heightened by the force of novelty, and made more intoxicating by a sense of the misery in which he had so long languished, and perhaps of the insults which he had formerly borne, and which he might now think himself entitled to revenge. It is too common for those who have unjustly suffered pain, to inflict it likewise in their turn with the same injustice, and to imagine that they have a right to treat others as they have themselves been treated.

That Mr. Savage was too much elevated by any good fortune, is generally known; and some passages of his introduction to *The Author to be let* sufficiently shew, that he did not wholly refrain from such satire as he afterwards thought very unjust, when he was exposed to it himself;
for,

for, when he was afterwards ridiculed in the character of a distressed poet, he very easily discovered, that distress was not a proper subject for merriment, or topick of invective. He was then able to discern, that if misery be the effect of virtue, it ought to be revered; if of ill-fortune, to be pitied; and if of vice, not to be insulted, because it is perhaps itself a punishment adequate to the crime by which it was produced. And the humanity of that man can deserve no panegyrick, who is capable of reproaching a criminal in the hands of the executioner.

But these reflections, though they readily occurred to him in the first and last parts of his life, were, I am afraid, for a long time forgotten; at least they were, like many other maxims, treasured up in his mind, rather for shew than use, and operated very little upon his conduct, however elegantly he might sometimes explain, or however forcibly he might inculcate them.

His degradation therefore from the condition which he had enjoyed with such wanton thoughtlessness, was considered by many as an occasion of triumph. Those who had before
paid

paid their court to him without success, soon returned the contempt which they had suffered; and they who had received favours from him, for of such favours as he could bestow he was very liberal, did not always remember them. So much more certain are the effects of resentment than of gratitude: it is not only to many more pleasing to recollect those faults which place others below them, than those virtues by which they are themselves comparatively depressed: but it is likewise more easy to neglect, than to recompense; and though there are few who will practise a laborious virtue, there will never be wanting multitudes that will indulge an easy vice.

Savage, however, was very little disturbed at the marks of contempt which his ill-fortune brought upon him, from those whom he never esteemed, and with whom he never considered himself as levelled by any calamities: and though it was not without some uneasiness that he saw some, whose friendship he valued, change their behaviour; he yet observed their coldness without much emotion, considered them as the slaves of fortune and the wor-
shippers

shippers of prosperity, and was more inclined to despise them, than to lament himself.

It does not appear that, after this return of his wants, he found mankind equally favourable to him, as at his first appearance in the world. His story, though in reality not less melancholy, was less affecting, because it was no longer new; it therefore procured him no new friends; and those that had formerly relieved him, thought they might now consign him to others. He was now likewise considered by many rather as criminal, than as unhappy; for the friends of Lord Tyrconnel, and of his mother, were sufficiently industrious to publish his weaknesses, which were indeed very numerous; and nothing was forgotten, that might make him either hateful or ridiculous.

It cannot but be imagined, that such representations of his faults must make great numbers less sensible of his distress; many, who had only an opportunity to hear one part, made no scruple to propagate the account which they received; many assisted their circulation from malice or revenge; and perhaps many pretended to credit them, that they might with a better

better grace withdraw their regard, or withhold their assistance.

Savage, however, was not one of those, who suffered himself to be injured without resistance, nor was less diligent in exposing the faults of Lord Tyrconnel, over whom he obtained at least this advantage, that he drove him first to the practice of outrage and violence; for he was so much provoked by the wit and virulence of Savage, that he came with a number of attendants, that did no honour to his courage, to beat him at a coffee-house. But it happened that he had left the place a few minutes; and his lordship had, without danger, the pleasure of boasting how he would have treated him. Mr. Savage went next day to repay his visit at his own house; but was prevailed on, by his domesticks, to retire without insisting upon seeing him.

Lord Tyrconnel was accused by Mr. Savage of some actions, which scarcely any provocations will be thought sufficient to justify; such as seizing what he had in his lodgings, and other instances of wanton cruelty, by which he increased the distress of Savage, without any advantage to himself.

These

These mutual accusations were retorted on both sides, for many years, with the utmost degree of virulence and rage; and time seemed rather to augment than diminish their resentment. That the anger of Mr. Savage should be kept alive, is not strange, because he felt every day the consequences of the quarrel; but it might reasonably have been hoped, that Lord Tyrconnel might have relented, and at length have forgot those provocations, which, however they might have once inflamed him, had not in reality much hurt him.

The spirit of Mr. Savage indeed never suffered him to solicit a reconciliation; he returned reproach for reproach, and insult for insult; his superiority of wit supplied the disadvantages of his fortune, and enabled him to form a party, and prejudice great numbers in his favour.

But though this might be some gratification of his vanity, it afforded very little relief to his necessities; and he was very frequently reduced to uncommon hardships, of which, however, he never made any mean or importunate complaints, being formed rather to bear
misery

misery with fortitude, than enjoy prosperity with moderation.

He now thought himself again at liberty to expose the cruelty of his mother; and therefore, I believe, about this time, published *The Bastard*, a poem remarkable for the vivacious sallies of thought in the beginning, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of base birth; and the pathetic sentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he suffered by the crime of his parents.

The vigour and spirit of the verses, the peculiar circumstances of the author, the novelty of the subject, and the notoriety of the story to which the allusions are made, procured this performance a very favourable reception; great numbers were immediately dispersed, and editions were multiplied with unusual rapidity.

One circumstance attended the publication, which Savage used to relate with great satisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem was with "due reverence" inscribed, happened then to be at Bath, where she could not conveniently retire from censure, or conceal herself from observation; and no sooner did the reputation
of

of the poem begin to spread, than she heard it repeated in all places of concourse, nor could she enter the assembly-rooms or cross the walks, without being saluted with some lines from *The Bastard*.

This was perhaps the first time that ever she discovered a sense of shame, and on this occasion the power of wit was very conspicuous; the wretch who had, without scruple, proclaimed herself an adultress, and who had first endeavoured to starve her son, then to transport him, and afterwards to hang him, was not able to bear the representation of her own conduct; but fled from reproach, though she felt no pain from guilt, and left Bath with the utmost haste, to shelter herself among the crowds of London.

Thus Savage had the satisfaction of finding, that, though he could not reform his mother, he could punish her, and that he did not always suffer alone.

The pleasure which he received from this increase of his poetical reputation, was sufficient for some time to overbalance the miseries of want, which this performance did not much alleviate; for it was sold for a very trivial

vial sum to a bookfeller, who, though the success was so uncommon, that five impressions were sold, of which many were undoubtedly very numerous, had not generosity sufficient to admit the unhappy writer to any part of the profit.

The sale of this poem was always mentioned by Mr. Savage with the utmost elevation of heart, and referred to by him as an incontestable proof of a general acknowledgment of his abilities. It was indeed the only production of which he could justly boast a general reception.

But though he did not lose the opportunity which success gave him, of setting a high rate on his abilities, but paid due deference to the suffrages of mankind when they were given in his favour, he did not suffer his esteem of himself to depend upon others, nor found any thing sacred in the voice of the people when they were inclined to censure him; he then readily shewed the folly of expecting that the public should judge right, observed how slowly poetical merit had often forced its way into the world; he contented himself with the applause of men of judgement, and was somewhat

what disposed to exclude all those from the character of men of judgment who did not applaud him.

But he was at other times more favourable to mankind than to think them blind to the beauties of his works, and imputed the slowness of their sale to other causes; either they were published at a time when the town was empty, or when the attention of the publick was engrossed by some struggle in the parliament, or some other object of general concern; or they were by the neglect of the publisher not diligently dispersed, or by his avarice not advertised with sufficient frequency. Address, or industry, or liberality, was always wanting; and the blame was laid rather on any person than the author.

By arts like these, arts which every man practises in some degree, and to which too much of the little tranquillity of life is to be ascribed, Savage was always able to live at peace with himself. Had he indeed only made use of these expedients to alleviate the loss or want of fortune or reputation, or any other advantages which it is not in man's power to bestow upon himself, they might have been justly men-

tioned as instances of a philosophical mind, and very properly proposed to the imitation of multitudes, who, for want of diverting their imaginations with the same dexterity, languish under afflictions which might be easily removed.

It were doubtless to be wished, that truth and reason were universally prevalent; that every thing were esteemed according to its real value; and that men would secure themselves from being disappointed in their endeavours after happiness, by placing it only in virtue, which is always to be obtained; but if adventitious and foreign pleasures must be pursued, it would be perhaps of some benefit, since that pursuit must frequently be fruitless, if the practice of Savage could be taught, that folly might be an antidote to folly, and one fallacy be obviated by another.

But the danger of this pleasing intoxication must not be concealed; nor indeed can any one, after having observed the life of Savage, need to be cautioned against it. By imputing none of his miseries to himself, he continued to act upon the same principles, and to follow the same path; was never made wiser by his
sus-

sufferings, nor preserved by one misfortune from falling into another. He proceeded throughout his life to tread the same steps on the same circle; always applauding his past conduct, or at least forgetting it, to amuse himself with phantoms of happiness, which were dancing before him; and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reason, when it would have discovered the illusion, and shewn him, what he never wished to see, his real state.

He is even accused, after having lulled his imagination with those ideal opiates, of having tried the same experiment upon his conscience; and, having accustomed himself to impute all deviations from the right to foreign causes, it is certain that he was upon every occasion too easily reconciled to himself; and that he appeared very little to regret those practices which had impaired his reputation. The reigning error of his life was, that he mistook the love for the practice of virtue, and was indeed not so much a good man, as the friend of goodness.

This at least must be allowed him, that he always preserved a strong sense of the dignity, the beauty, and the necessity of virtue; and that he never contributed deliberately to spread

corruption amongst mankind. His actions, which were generally precipitate, were often blameable ; but his writings, being the productions of study, uniformly tended to the exaltation of the mind, and the propagation of morality and piety.

These writings may improve mankind, when his failings shall be forgotten ; and therefore he must be considered, upon the whole, as a benefactor to the world ; nor can his personal example do any hurt, since, whoever hears of his faults, will hear of the miseries which they brought upon him, and which would deserve less pity, had not his condition been such as made his faults pardonable. He may be considered as a child exposed to all the temptations of indigence, at an age when resolution was not yet strengthened by conviction, nor virtue confirmed by habit ; a circumstance which, in his *Bastard*, he laments in a very affecting manner :

— No Mother's care

Shielded my infant innocence with prayer :
No Father's guardian-hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice restrain'd.

The Bastard, however it might provoke or mortify his mother, could not be expected to melt her to compassion, so that he was still under the same want of the necessaries of life; and he therefore exerted all the interest which his wit, or his birth, or his misfortunes, could procure, to obtain, upon the death of Eusden, the place of Poet Laureat, and prosecuted his application with so much diligence, that the King publicly declared it his intention to bestow it upon him: but such was the fate of Savage, that even the King, when he intended his advantage, was disappointed in his schemes; for the Lord Chamberlain, who has the disposal of the laurel, as one of the appendages of his office, either did not know the King's design, or did not approve it, or thought the nomination of the Laureat an encroachment upon his rights, and therefore bestowed the laurel upon Colley Cibber.

Mr. Savage, thus disappointed, took a resolution of applying to the queen, that, having once given him life, she would enable him to support it, and therefore published a short poem on her birth-day, to which he gave the

odd title of "Volunteer Laureat." The event of this essay he has himself related in the following letter, which he prefixed to the poem, when he afterwards reprinted it in "The Gentleman's Magazine," from whence I have copied it intire, as this was one of the few attempts in which Mr. Savage succeeded.

" Mr. URBAN,

" In your Magazine for February you published the last ' Volunteer Laureat,' written on a very melancholy occasion, the death of the royal patroness of arts and literature in general, and of the author of that poem in particular; I now send you the first that Mr. Savage wrote under that title.—This gentleman, notwithstanding a very considerable interest, being, on the death of Mr. Eusden, disappointed of the Laureat's place, wrote the following verses; which were no sooner published but the late Queen sent to a bookseller for them. The author had not at that time a friend either to get him introduced, or his poem presented at Court; yet such was the unspeakable goodness of that Princess, that, notwithstanding this act of ceremony

" many

“mony was wanting, in a few days after pub-
 “lication Mr. Savage received a Bank-bill of
 “fifty pounds, and a gracious message from
 “her Majesty, by the Lord North and Guil-
 “ford, to this effect; ‘That her Majesty was
 “highly pleased with the verses; that she took
 “particularly kind his lines there relating to
 “the King; that he had permission to write
 “annually on the same subject; and that he
 “should yearly receive the like present, till
 “something better (which was her Majesty’s
 “intention) could be done for him.’ After
 “this, he was permitted to present one of his
 “annual poems to her Majesty, had the ho-
 “nour of kissing her hand, and met with the
 “most gracious reception.

“Yours, &c.”

Such was the performance*, and such its re-
 ception; a reception, which, though by no means
 unkind, was yet not in the highest degree ge-
 neros: to chain down the genius of a writer
 to an annual panegyric shewed in the Queen

* This poem, being inserted in the future part of this collec-
 tion, vol. XLI. p. 215, is here omitted. E.

too much desire of hearing her own praises, and a greater regard to herself than to him on whom her bounty was conferred. It was a kind of avaricious generosity, by which flattery was rather purchased than genius rewarded.

Mrs. Oldfield had formerly given him the same allowance with much more heroic intention: she had no other view than to enable him to prosecute his studies, and to set himself above the want of assistance, and was contented with doing good without stipulating for encomiums.

Mr. Savage, however, was not at liberty to make exceptions, but was ravished with the favours which he had received, and probably yet more with those which he was promised: he considered himself now as a favourite of the Queen, and did not doubt but a few annual poems would establish him in some profitable employment.

He therefore assumed the title of "Volunteer Laureat," not without some reprehensions from Cibber, who informed him, that the title of "Laureat" was a mark of honour conferred by the King, from whom all honour is derived, and which therefore no man has a right to bestow

flow upon himself; and added, that he might, with equal propriety, style himself a Volunteer Lord, or Volunteer Baronet. It cannot be denied that the remark was just; but Savage did not think any title, which was conferred upon Mr. Cibber, so honourable as that the usurpation of it could be imputed to him as an instance of very exorbitant vanity, and therefore continued to write under the same title, and received every year the same reward.

He did not appear to consider these encomiums as tests of his abilities, or as any thing more than annual hints to the Queen of her promise, or acts of ceremony, by the performance of which he was intitled to his pension, and therefore did not labour them with great diligence, or print more than fifty each year, except that for some of the last years he regularly inserted them in "The Gentleman's Magazine," by which they were dispersed over the kingdom.

Of some of them he had himself so low an opinion, that he intended to omit them in the collection of poems, for which he printed proposals, and solicited subscriptions; nor can it seem strange, that, being confined to the same
sub-

subject, he should be at some times indolent, and at others unsuccessful; that he should sometimes delay a disagreeable task, till it was too late to perform it well; or that he should sometimes repeat the same sentiment on the same occasion, or at others be misled by an attempt after novelty to forced conceptions and far-fetched images.

He wrote indeed with a double intention, which supplied him with some variety; for his business was to praise the Queen for the favours which he had received, and to complain to her of the delay of those which she had promised: in some of his pieces, therefore, gratitude is predominant, and in some discontent; in some he represents himself as happy in her patronage; and in others, as disconsolate to find himself neglected.

Her promise, like other promises made to this unfortunate man, was never performed, though he took sufficient care that it should not be forgotten. The publication of his "Volunteer Laureat" procured him no other reward than a regular remittance of fifty pounds

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He was not so depressed by his disappointments as to neglect any opportunity that was offered of advancing his interest. When the Princess Anne was married, he wrote a poem * upon her departure, only, as he declared, "because it was expected from him," and he was not willing to bar his own prospects by any appearance of neglect.

He never mentioned any advantage gained by this poem, or any regard that was paid to it; and therefore it is likely that it was considered at court as an act of duty, to which he was obliged by his dependence, and which it was therefore not necessary to reward by any new favour: or perhaps the Queen really intended his advancement, and therefore thought it superfluous to lavish presents upon a man whom she intended to establish for life.

About this time not only his hopes were in danger of being frustrated, but his pension likewise of being obstructed, by an accidental calumny. The writer of "The Daily Courant," a paper then published under the direction of the ministry, charged him with a

* Printed in vol. XLI. p. 284.

crime, which, though very great in itself, would have been remarkably invidious in him, and might very justly have incensed the Queen against him. He was accused by name of influencing elections against the court, by appearing at the head of a tory mob; nor did the accuser fail to aggravate his crime, by representing it as the effect of the most atrocious ingratitude and a kind of rebellion against the Queen, who had first preserved him from an infamous death, and afterwards distinguished him by her favour, and supported him by her charity. The charge, as it was open and confident, was likewise by good fortune very particular. The place of the transaction was mentioned, and the whole series of the rioter's conduct related. This exactness made Mr. Savage's vindication easy; for he never had in his life seen the place which was declared to be the scene of his wickedness, nor ever had been present in any town when its representatives were chosen. This answer he therefore made haste to publish, with all the circumstances necessary to make it credible; and very reasonably demanded, that the accusation should be retracted in the same paper, that he might no longer

longer suffer the imputation of sedition and ingratitude. This demand was likewise pressed by him in a private letter to the author of the paper, who either trusting to the protection of those whose defence he had undertaken, or having entertained some personal malice against Mr. Savage, or fearing, lest, by retracting so confident an assertion, he should impair the credit of his paper, refused to give him that satisfaction.

Mr. Savage therefore thought it necessary, to his own vindication, to prosecute him in the King's Bench; but as he did not find any ill effects from the accusation, having sufficiently cleared his innocence, he thought any farther procedure would have the appearance of revenge; and therefore willingly dropped it.

He saw soon afterwards a process commenced in the same court against himself, on an information in which he was accused of writing and publishing an obscene pamphlet.

It was always Mr. Savage's desire to be distinguished; and, when any controversy became popular, he never wanted some reason for engaging in it with great ardour, and appearing at the head of the party which he had chosen.

chosen. As he was never celebrated for his prudence, he had no sooner taken his side, and informed himself of the chief topicks of the dispute, than he took all opportunities of asserting and propagating his principles, without much regard to his own interest, or any other visible design than that of drawing upon himself the attention of mankind.

The dispute between the bishop of London and the chancellor is well known to have been for some time the chief topick of political conversation; and therefore Mr. Savage, in pursuance of his character, endeavoured to become conspicuous among the controvertists with which every coffee-house was filled on that occasion. He was an indefatigable opposer of all the claims of ecclesiastical power, though he did not know on what they were founded; and was therefore no friend to the Bishop of London. But he had another reason for appearing as a warm advocate for Dr. Rundle; for he was the friend of Mr. Foster and Mr. Thomson, who were the friends of Mr. Savage.

Thus remote was his interest in the question, which, however, as he imagined, concerned him so nearly, that it was not sufficient

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to harangue and dispute, but necessary likewise to write upon it.

He therefore engaged with great ardour in a new poem, called by him, "The Progress of a Divine;" in which he conducts a profligate priest by all the gradations of wickedness from a poor curacy in the country, to the highest preferments of the church, and describes with that humour which was natural to him, and that knowledge which was extended to all the diversities of human life, his behaviour in every station; and insinuates, that this priest, thus accomplished, found at last a patron in the Bishop of London.

When he was asked by one of his friends, on what pretence he could charge the bishop with such an action? he had no more to say, than that he had only inverted the accusation, and that he thought it reasonable to believe, that he, who obstructed the rise of a good man without reason, would for bad reasons promote the exaltation of a villain.

The clergy were universally provoked by this satire; and Savage, who, as was his constant practice, had set his name to his performance, was censured in "The Weekly
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"Miscellany *" with severity, which he did not seem inclined to forget.

But

* A short satire was likewise published in the same paper, in which were the following lines :

" For cruel murder doomed to hempen death,
Savage, by royal grace, prolong'd his breath.
Well might you think he spent his future years
In prayer, and fasting, and repentant tears.
—But, O vain hope !—the truly Savage cries,
" Priests, and their slavish doctrines, I despise.
" Shall I ———
" Who, by free-thinking to free action fir'd,
" In midnight brawls a deathless name acquir'd,
" Now stoop to learn of ecclesiastic men ?—
" —No, arm'd with rhyme, at priests I'll take my aim.
" Though prudence bids me murder but their fame "

" Weekly Miscellany."

An answer was published in " The Gentleman's Magazine," written by an unknown hand, from which the following lines are selected :

" Transform'd by thoughtless rage, and midnight wine,
From malice free, and push'd without design ;
In equal brawl if Savage lung'd a thrust,
And brought the youth a victim to the dust ;
So strong the hand of accident appears,
The royal hand from guilt and vengeance clears.
Instead of wasting " all thy future years,
" Savage, in prayer and vain repentant tears ;"

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But a return of invective was not thought a sufficient punishment. The Court of King's Bench was therefore moved against him, and he was obliged to return an answer to a charge of obscenity. It was urged, in his defence, that obscenity was criminal when it was intended to promote the practice of vice; but that Mr. Savage had only introduced obscene ideas with the view of exposing them to detestation, and of amending the age, by shewing the deformity of wickedness. This plea was

Exert thy pen to mend a vicious age,
To curb the priest, and sink his high-church rage;
To shew what frauds the holy vestments hide,
The nests of avarice, lust, and pedant pride:
Then change the scene, let merit brightly shine,
And round the patriot twist the wreath divine;
The heavenly guide deliver down to fame;
In well-tun'd lays transmit a Foster's name;
Touch every passion with harmonious art,
Exalt the genius, and correct the heart.
Thus future times shall royal grace extol:
Thus polish'd lines thy present fame enrol.

——— But grant ———

——— Maliciously that Savage plung'd the steel,
And made the youth its shining vengeance feel:
My soul abhors the act, the man detests,
But more the bigotry of priestly breasts.

“Gentleman's Magazine, May, 1735.” Dr. J.

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admitted; and Sir Philip Yorke, who then presided in that court, dismissed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's writings. The prosecution, however, answered in some measure the purpose of those by whom it was set on foot; for Mr. Savage was so far intimidated by it, that, when the edition of his poem was sold, he did not venture to reprint it; so that it was in a short time forgotten, or forgotten by all but those whom it offended.

It is said, that some endeavours were used to incense the Queen against him; but he found advocates to obviate at least part of their effect; for though he was never advanced, he still continued to receive his pension.

This poem drew more infamy upon him than any incident of his life; and, as his conduct cannot be vindicated, it is proper to secure his memory from reproach, by informing those whom he made his enemies, that he never intended to repeat the provocation; and that, though, whenever he thought he had any reason to complain of the clergy, he used to threaten them with a new edition of

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"The Progress of a Divine," it was his calm and settled resolution to suppress it for ever.

He once intended to have made a better reparation for the folly or injustice with which he might be charged, by writing another poem, called "The Progress of a Free-thinker," whom he intended to lead through all the stages of vice and folly, to convert him from virtue to wickedness, and from religion to infidelity, by all the modish sophistry used for that purpose; and at last to dismiss him by his own hand into the other world.

That he did not execute this design, is a real loss to mankind, for he was too well acquainted with all the scenes of debauchery to have failed in his representations of them, and too zealous for virtue not to have represented them in such a manner as should expose them either to ridicule or detestation.

But this plan was, like others, formed and laid aside, till the vigour of his imagination was spent, and the effervescence of invention had subsided; but soon gave way to some other design, which pleased by its novelty for a while, and then was neglected like the former.

He was still in his usual exigences, having no certain support but the pension allowed him by the Queen, which, though it might have kept an exact œconomist from want, was very far from being sufficient for Mr. Savage, who had never been accustomed to dismiss any of his appetites without the gratification which they solicited, and whom nothing but want of money withheld from partaking of every pleasure that fell within his view.

His conduct with regard to his pension was very particular. No sooner had he changed the bill, than he vanished from the sight of all his acquaintance, and lay for some time out of the reach of all the enquiries that friendship or curiosity could make after him ; at length he appeared again penniless as before, but never informed even those whom he seemed to regard most, where he had been ; nor was his retreat ever discovered.

This was his constant practice during the whole time that he received the pension from the Queen : he regularly disappeared and returned. He, indeed, affirmed that he retired to study, and that the money supported him in solitude for many months ; but his friends declared,

clared, that the short time in which it was spent sufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His politeness and his wit still raised him friends, who were desirous of setting him at length free from that indigence by which he had been hitherto oppressed; and therefore solicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour with so much earnestness, that they obtained a promise of the next place that should become vacant, not exceeding two hundred pounds a year. This promise was made with an uncommon declaration, "that it was not the promise of a minister to a petitioner, but of a friend to his friend."

Mr. Savage now concluded himself set at ease for ever, and, as he observes in a poem written on that incident of his life, trusted and was trusted; but soon found that his confidence was ill-grounded, and this friendly promise was not inviolable. He spent a long time in solicitations, and at last despaired and desisted.

He did not indeed deny that he had given the minister some reason to believe that he should not strengthen his own interest by advancing him, for he had taken care to distin-

guish himself in coffee-houses as an advocate for the ministry of the last years of Queen Anne, and was always ready to justify the conduct, and exalt the character of Lord Bolingbroke, whom he mentions with great regard in an Epistle upon Authors, which he wrote about that time; but was too wise to publish, and of which only some fragments have appeared, inserted by him in the "Magazine" after his retirement.

To despair was not, however, the character of Savage; when one patronage failed, he had recourse to another. The prince was now extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of some writers whom Mr. Savage did not think superior to himself, and therefore he resolved to address a poem to him.

For this purpose he made choice of a subject which could regard only persons of the highest rank and greatest affluence, and which was therefore proper for a poem intended to procure the patronage of a prince; and having retired for some time to Richmond, that he might prosecute his design in full tranquillity, without the temptations of pleasure, or the solicitations of creditors, by which his meditations were in equal danger of being disconcerted, he produced
a poem,

a poem, "On Public Spirit, with regard to
"Publick Works."

The plan of this poem is very extensive, and comprises a multitude of topicks, each of which might furnish matter sufficient for a long performance, and of which some have already employed more eminent writers; but as he was perhaps not fully acquainted with the whole extent of his own design, and was writing to obtain a supply of wants too pressing to admit of long or accurate enquiries, he passes negligently over many publick works, which, even in his own opinion, deserved to be more elaborately treated.

But though he may sometimes disappoint his reader by transient touches upon these subjects, which have often been considered, and therefore naturally raise expectations, he must be allowed amply to compensate his omissions, by expatiating, in the conclusion of his work, upon a kind of beneficence not yet celebrated by any eminent poet, though it now appears more susceptible of embellishments, more adapted to exalt the ideas, and affect the passions, than many of those which have hitherto been thought most worthy of the ornaments of verse.

The settlement of colonies in uninhabited countries, the establishment of those in security, whose misfortunes have made their own country no longer pleasing or safe, the acquisition of property without injury to any, the appropriation of the waste and luxuriant bounties of nature, and the enjoyment of those gifts which heaven has scattered upon regions uncultivated and unoccupied, cannot be considered without giving rise to a great number of pleasing ideas, and bewildering the imagination in delightful prospects; and, therefore, whatever speculations they may produce in those who have confined themselves to political studies, naturally fixed the attention, and excited the applause, of a poet. The politician, when he considers men driven into other countries for shelter, and obliged to retire to forests and deserts, and pass their lives and fix their posterity in the remotest corners of the world, to avoid those hardships which they suffer or fear in their native place, may very properly enquire, why the legislature does not provide a remedy for these miseries, rather than encourage an escape from them. He may conclude, that the flight of every honest man is a loss to the

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the community ; that those who are unhappy without guilt ought to be relieved ; and the life, which is overburthened by accidental calamities, set at ease by the care of the publick ; and that those, who have by misconduct forfeited their claim to favour, ought rather to be made useful to the society which they have injured, than be driven from it. But the poet is employed in a more pleasing undertaking than that of proposing laws which, however just or expedient, will never be made, or endeavouring to reduce to rational schemes of government societies which were formed by chance, and are conducted by the private passions of those who preside in them. He guides the unhappy fugitive from want and persecution, to plenty, quiet, and security, and seats him in scenes of peaceful solitude, and undisturbed repose.

Savage has not forgotten, amidst the pleasing sentiments which this prospect of retirement suggested to him, to censure those crimes which have been generally committed by the discoverers of new regions, and to expose the enormous wickedness of making war upon barbarous nations because they cannot resist, and of invading countries because they are fruitful;

fruitful; of extending navigation only to propagate vice, and of visiting distant lands only to lay them waste. He has asserted the natural equality of mankind, and endeavoured to suppress that pride which inclines men to imagine that right is the consequence of power.

His description of the various miseries which force men to seek for refuge in distant countries, affords another instance of his proficiency in the important and extensive study of human life; and the tenderness with which he recounts them, another proof of his humanity and benevolence.

It is observable, that the close of this poem discovers a change which experience had made in Mr. Savage's opinions. In a poem written by him in his youth, and published in his *Miscellanies*, he declares his contempt of the contracted views and narrow prospects of the middle state of life, and declares his resolution either to tower like the cedar, or be trampled like the shrub; but in this poem, though addressed to a prince, he mentions this state of life as comprising those who ought most to attract reward, those who merit most the confidence of power and the familiarity of greatness; and,

and, accidentally mentioning this passage to one of his friends, declared, that in his opinion all the virtue of mankind was comprehended in that state.

In describing villas and gardens, he did not omit to condemn that absurd custom which prevails among the English, of permitting servants to receive money from strangers for the entertainment that they receive, and therefore inserted in his poem these lines:

But what the flowering pride of gardens rare,
However royal, or however fair,
If gates, which to access should still give way,
Ope but, like Peter's paradise, for pay?
If perquisited varlets frequent stand,
And each new walk must a new tax demand?
What foreign eye but with contempt surveys?
What Muse shall from oblivion snatch their praise?

But before the publication of his performance he recollected, that the Queen allowed her garden and cave at Richmond to be shewn for money, and that she so openly countenanced the practice, that she had bestowed the privilege of shewing them as a place of profit on a man, whose merit she valued herself upon rewarding,

warding, though she gave him only the liberty of disgracing his country.

He therefore thought, with more prudence than was often exerted by him, that the publication of these lines might be officiously represented as an insult upon the Queen, to whom he owed his life and his subsistence; and that the propriety of his observation would be no security against the censures which the unseasonableness of it might draw upon him; he therefore suppressed the passage in the first edition, but after the Queen's death thought the same caution no longer necessary, and restored it to the proper place.

The poem was therefore published without any political faults, and inscribed to the Prince; but Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to present it to him, had no other method of attracting his observation than the publication of frequent advertisements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occasions.

This disappointment he never mentioned without indignation, being by some means or other confident that the prince was not ignorant of his address to him; and insinuated, that,

that, if any advances in popularity could have been made by distinguishing him, he had not written without notice, or without reward.

He was once inclined to have presented his poem in person, and sent to the printer for a copy with that design; but either his opinion changed, or his resolution deserted him, and he continued to resent neglect without attempting to force himself into regard.

Nor was the publick much more favourable than his patron, for only seventy-two were sold, though the performance was much commended by some whose judgement in that kind of writing is generally allowed. But Savage easily reconciled himself to mankind without imputing any defect to his work, by observing that his poem was unluckily published two days after the prorogation of the parliament, and by consequence at a time when all those who could be expected to regard it were in the hurry of preparing for their departure, or engaged in taking leave of others upon their dismissal from publick affairs.

It must be however allowed, in justification of the publick, that this performance is not the most excellent of Mr. Savage's works; and
that,

that, though it cannot be denied to contain many striking sentiments, majestic lines, and just observations, it is in general not sufficiently polished in the language, or enlivened in the imagery, or digested in the plan.

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which was such as very few could have supported with equal patience; but to which, it must likewise be confessed, that few would have been exposed who received punctually fifty pounds a year; a salary which, though by no means equal to the demands of vanity and luxury, is yet found sufficient to support families above want, and was undoubtedly more than the necessities of life require.

But no sooner had he received his pension, than he withdrew to his darling privacy, from which he returned in a short time to his former distress, and for some part of the year generally lived by chance, eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintances, from which the meanness of his dress often excluded him, when the politeness and variety of his conversation would have been thought a sufficient recompence for his entertainment.

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He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and passed the night sometimes in mean houses, which are set open at night to any casual wanderers, sometimes in cellars, among the riot and filth of the meanest and most profligate of the rabble; and sometimes, when he had not money to support even the expences of these receptacles, walked about the streets till he was weary, and lay down in the summer upon a bulk, or in the winter, with his associates in poverty, among the ashes of a glass-house.

In this manner were passed those days and those nights which nature had enabled him to have employed in elevated speculations, useful studies, or pleasing conversation. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glass house, among thieves and beggars, was to be found the Author of *The Wanderer*, the man of exalted sentiments, extensive views, and curious observations; the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman, whose ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist, whose eloquence might have influenced senates, and whose delicacy might have polished courts.

It cannot but be imagined that such necessities might sometimes force him upon disreputable

ble practices; and it is probable that these lines in "The Wanderer" were occasioned by his reflections on his own conduct:

Though misery leads to happiness, and truth,
 Unequal to the load, this languid youth,
 (O, let none censure, if, untried by grief,
 If, amidst woe, untempted by relief,)
 He stoop'd reluctant to low arts of shame,
 Which then, ev'n then he scorn'd, and blush'd to
 name.

Whoever was acquainted with him was certain to be solicited for small sums, which the frequency of the request made in time considerable, and he was therefore quickly shunned by those who were become familiar enough to be trusted with his necessities; but his rambling manner of life, and constant appearance at houses of publick resort, always procured him a new succession of friends, whose kindness had not been exhausted by repeated requests; so that he was seldom absolutely without resources, but had in his utmost exigences this comfort, that he always imagined himself sure of speedy relief.

It was observed, that he always asked favours of this kind without the least submission.

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or apparent consciousness of dependence, and that he did not seem to look upon a compliance with his request as an obligation that deserved any extraordinary acknowledgements; but a refusal was resented by him as an affront, or complained of as an injury; nor did he readily reconcile himself to those who either denied to lend, or gave him afterwards any intimation that they expected to be repaid.

He was sometimes so far compassionated by those who knew both his merit and distresses, that they received him into their families, but they soon discovered him to be a very incommodious inmate; for, being always accustomed to an irregular manner of life, he could not confine himself to any stated hours, or pay any regard to the rules of a family, but would prolong his conversation till midnight, without considering that business might require his friend's application in the morning; and, when he had persuaded himself to retire to bed, was not, without equal difficulty, called up to dinner; it was therefore impossible to pay him any distinction without the entire subversion of all œconomy, a kind of establishment which,

wherever he went, he always appeared ambitious to overthrow.

It must therefore be acknowledged, in justification of mankind, that it was not always by the negligence or coldness of his friends that Savage was distressed, but because it was in reality very difficult to preserve him long in a state of ease. To supply him with money was a hopeless attempt; for no sooner did he see himself master of a sum sufficient to set him free from care for a day, than he became profuse and luxurious. When once he had entered a tavern, or engaged in a scheme of pleasure, he never retired till want of money obliged him to some new expedient. If he was entertained in a family, nothing was any longer to be regarded there but amusements and jollity; wherever Savage entered, he immediately expected that order and business should fly before him, that all should thenceforward be left to hazard, and that no dull principle of domestick management should be opposed to his inclination, or intrude upon his gaiety.

His distresses, however afflictive, never dejected him; in his lowest state he wanted not spirit

spirit to assert the natural dignity of wit, and was always ready to repress that insolence which the superiority of fortune incited, and to trample on that reputation which rose upon any other basis than that of merit; he never admitted any gross familiarities, or submitted to be treated otherwise than as an equal. Once, when he was without lodging, meat, or clothes, one of his friends, a man indeed not remarkable for moderation in his prosperity, left a message, that he desired to see him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to assist him, but was very much disgusted that he should presume to prescribe the hour of his attendance, and, I believe, refused to visit him, and rejected his kindness.

The same invincible temper, whether firmness or obstinacy, appeared in his conduct to the Lord Tyrconnel, from whom he very frequently demanded that the allowance which was once paid him should be restored; but with whom he never appeared to entertain for a moment the thought of soliciting a reconciliation, and whom he treated at once with all the haughtiness of superiority, and all the bitterness of resentment. He wrote to him, not

in a style of supplication or respect, but of reproach, menace, and contempt; and appeared determined, if he ever regained his allowance, to hold it only by the right of conquest.

As many more can discover that a man is richer than that he is, wiser than themselves, superiority of understanding is not so readily acknowledged as that of fortune; nor is that haughtiness, which the consciousness of great abilities incites, borne with the same submission as the tyranny of affluence; and therefore Savage, by asserting his claim to deference and regard, and by treating those with contempt whom better fortune animated to rebel against him, did not fail to raise a great number of enemies in the different classes of mankind. Those who thought themselves raised above him by the advantages of riches, hated him because they found no protection from the petulance of his wit. Those who were esteemed for their writings feared him as a critic, and maligned him as a rival, and almost all the smaller wits were his professed enemies.

Among these Mr. Miller so far indulged his resentment as to introduce him in a farce, and direct him to be personated on the stage, in a dress

dress like that which he then wore; a mean insult, which only insinuated that Savage had but one coat, and which was therefore despised by him rather than resented; for though he wrote a lampoon against Miller, he never printed it: and as no other person ought to prosecute that revenge from which the person who was injured desisted, I shall not preserve what Mr. Savage suppressed; of which the publication would indeed have been a punishment too severe for so impotent an assault.

The great hardships of poverty were to Savage not the want of lodging or of food, but the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him. He complained that as his affairs grew desperate, he found his reputation for capacity visibly decline; that his opinion in questions of criticism was no longer regarded, when his coat was out of fashion; and that those who, in the interval of his prosperity, were always encouraging him to great undertakings by encomiums on his genius and assurances of success, now received any mention of his designs with coldness, thought that the subjects on which he proposed to write were very difficult, and were ready to inform him, that the event

of a poem was uncertain, that an author ought to employ much time in the consideration of his plan, and not presume to sit down to write in confidence of a few cursory ideas, and a superficial knowledge ; difficulties were started on all sides, and he was no longer qualified for any performance but " The Volunteer Laureat."

Yet even this kind of contempt never depressed him ; for he always preserved a steady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach, which he should at any time earnestly endeavour to attain. He formed schemes of the same kind with regard to knowledge and to fortune, and flattered himself with advances to be made in science, as with riches, to be enjoyed in some distant period of his life. For the acquisition of knowledge he was indeed far better qualified than for that of riches ; for he was naturally inquisitive, and desirous of the conversation of those from whom any information was to be obtained, but by no means solicitous to improve those opportunities that were sometimes offered of raising his fortune ; and he was remarkably retentive of his ideas, which, when once he was in possession

session of them, rarely forsook him; a quality which could never be communicated to his money.

While he was thus wearing out his life in expectation that the Queen would some time recollect her promise, he had recourse to the usual practice of writers, and published proposals for printing his works by subscription, to which he was encouraged by the success of many who had not a better right to the favour of the publick; but, whatever was the reason, he did not find the world equally inclined to favour him; and he observed, with some discontent, that, though he offered his works at half a guinea, he was able to procure but a small number in comparison with those who subscribed twice as much to Duck.

Nor was it without indignation that he saw his proposals neglected by the Queen, who patronised Mr. Duck's with uncommon ardour, and incited a competition among those who attended the court, who should most promote his interest, and who should first offer a subscription. This was a distinction to which Mr. Savage made no scruple of asserting, that his birth, his misfortunes, and his genius,

gave a fairer title, than could be pleaded by him on whom it was conferred.

Savage's applications were however not universally unsuccessful; for some of the nobility countenanced his design, encouraged his proposals, and subscribed with great liberality. He related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that, upon receiving his proposals, he sent him ten guineas.

But the money which his subscriptions afforded him was not less volatile than that which he received from his other schemes; whenever a subscription was paid him, he went to a tavern; and, as money so collected is necessarily received in small sums, he never was able to send his poems to the press, but for many years continued his solicitation, and squandered whatever he obtained.

This project of printing his works was frequently revived; and, as his proposals grew obsolete, new ones were printed with fresher dates. To form schemes for the publication, was one of his favourite amusements; nor was he ever more at ease than when, with any friend who readily fell in with his schemes, he was adjusting the print, forming the advertisements,

ments, and regulating the dispersion of his new edition, which he really intended some time to publish, and which, as long as experience had shewn him the impossibility of printing the volume together, he at last determined to divide into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the first might supply the expences of the next.

Thus he spent his time in mean expedients and tormenting suspense, living for the greatest part in fear of prosecutions from his creditors, and consequently skulking in obscure parts of the town, of which he was no stranger to the remotest corners. But wherever he came, his address secured him friends, whom his necessities soon alienated; so that he had perhaps a more numerous acquaintance than any man ever before attained, there being scarcely any person eminent on any account to whom he was not known, or whose character he was not in some degree able to delineate.

To the acquisition of this extensive acquaintance every circumstance of his life contributed. He excelled in the arts of conversation, and therefore willingly practised them. He had seldom any home, or even a lodging in which he

he could be private; and therefore was driven into public-houses for the common conveniences of life and supports of nature. He was always ready to comply with every invitation, having no employment to withhold him, and often no money to provide for himself; and by dining with one company, he never failed of obtaining an introduction into another.

Thus dissipated was his life, and thus casual his subsistence; yet did not the distraction of his views hinder him from reflection, nor the uncertainty of his condition depress his gaiety. When he had wandered about without any fortunate adventure by which he was led into a tavern, he sometimes retired into the fields, and was able to employ his mind in study, to amuse it with pleasing imaginations; and seldom appeared to be melancholy, but when some sudden misfortune had just fallen upon him, and even then in a few moments he would disentangle himself from his perplexity, adopt the subject of conversation, and apply his mind wholly to the objects that others presented to it.

This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet imbittered, in 1738, with new

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calamities. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the prospects of preferment with which he so long entertained his imagination; and, as Sir Robert Walpole had before given him reason to believe that he never intended the performance of his promise, he was now abandoned again to fortune.

He was however, at that time, supported by a friend; and as it was not his custom to look out for distant calamities, or to feel any other pain than that which forced itself upon his senses, he was not much afflicted at his loss, and perhaps comforted himself that his pension would be now continued without the annual tribute of a panegyrick.

Another expectation contributed likewise to support him: he had taken a resolution to write a second tragedy upon the story of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he preserved a few lines of his former play, but made a total alteration of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters; so that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former.

Many of his friends blamed him for not making choice of another subject; but, in vindication of himself, he asserted, that it was
not

not easy to find a better ; and that he thought it his interest to extinguish the memory of the first tragedy, which he could only do by writing one less defective upon the same story ; by which he should entirely defeat the artifice of the bookfellers, who, after the death of any author of reputation, are always industrious to swell his works, by uniting his worst productions with his best.

In the execution of this scheme, however, he proceeded but slowly, and probably only employed himself upon it when he could find no other amusement ; but he pleased himself with counting the profits, and perhaps imagined, that the theatrical reputation which he was about to acquire, would be equivalent to all that he had lost by the death of his patroness.

He did not, in confidence of his approaching riches, neglect the measures proper to secure the continuance of his pension, though some of his favourers thought him culpable for omitting to write on her death ; but on her birthday next year, he gave a proof of the solidity of his judgement, and the power of his genius. He knew that the track of elegy had been so
long

long beaten, that it was impossible to travel in it without treading in the footsteps of those who had gone before him; and that therefore it was necessary, that he might distinguish himself from the herd of encomiasts, to find out some new walk of funeral panegyrick.

This difficult task he performed in such a manner, that his poem may be justly ranked among the best pieces that the death of princes has produced. By transferring the mention of her death to her birth-day, he has formed a happy combination of topicks, which any other man would have thought it very difficult to connect in one view, but which he has united in such a manner, that the relation between them appears natural; and it may be justly said, that what no other man would have thought on, it now appears scarcely possible for any man to miss.

The beauty of this peculiar combination of images is so masterly, that it is sufficient to set this poem above censure; and therefore it is not necessary to mention many other delicate touches which may be found in it, and which would deservedly be admired in any other performance.

To

To these proofs of his genius may be added, from the same poem, an instance of his prudence, an excellence for which he was not so often distinguished; he does not forget to remind the King, in the most delicate and artful manner, of continuing his pension.

With regard to the success of this address, he was for some time in suspense, but was in no great degree solicitous about it, and continued his labour upon his new tragedy with great tranquillity, till the friend who had for a considerable time supported him, removing his family to another place, took occasion to dismiss him. It then became necessary to enquire more diligently what was determined in his affair, having reason to suspect that no great favour was intended him, because he had not received his pension at the usual time.

It is said, that he did not take those methods of retrieving his interest, which were most likely to succeed; and some of those who were employed in the Exchequer cautioned him against too much violence in his proceedings: but Mr. Savage, who seldom regulated his conduct by the advice of others, gave way to his passion, and demanded of Sir Robert Walpole,

at

at his levee, the reason of the distinction that was made between him and the other pensioners of the Queen, with a degree of roughness which perhaps determined him to withdraw what had been only delayed.

Whatever was the crime of which he was accused or suspected, and whatever influence was employed against him, he received soon after an account that took from him all hopes of regaining his pension ; and he had now no prospect of subsistence but from his play, and he knew no way of living for the time required to finish it.

So peculiar were the misfortunes of this man, deprived of an estate and title by a particular law, exposed and abandoned by a mother, defrauded by a mother of a fortune which his father had allotted him, he entered the world without a friend ; and though his abilities forced themselves into esteem and reputation, he was never able to obtain any real advantage, and whatever prospects arose were always intercepted as he began to approach them. The king's intentions in his favour were frustrated ; his dedication to the prince, whose generosity on every other occasion was eminent, procured him

him no reward ; Sir Robert Walpole, who valued himself upon keeping his promise to others, broke it to him without regret ; and the bounty of the Queen was, after her death, withdrawn from him, and from him only.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore, not only with decency, but with cheerfulness ; nor was his gaiety clouded even by his last disappointments, though he was in a short time reduced to the lowest degree of distress, and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another instance of the insurmountable obstinacy of his spirit ; his cloaths were worn out ; and he received notice, that at a coffee-house some cloaths and linen were left for him : the person who sent them did not, I believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might spare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit ; but though the offer was so far generous, it was made with some neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage so much resented, that he refused the present, and declined to enter the house till the cloaths that had been designed for him were taken away.

His distress was now publickly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert

cert some measures for his relief; and one of them wrote a letter to him, in which he expressed his concern “for the miserable withdrawing of “his pension;” and gave him hopes, that in a short time he should find himself supplied with a competence, “without any dependence on “those little creatures which we are pleased to “call the Great.”

The scheme proposed for this happy and independent subsistence was, that he should retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a year, to be raised by a subscription, on which he was to live privately in a cheap place, without aspiring any more to affluence, or having any farther care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from those of his friends; for they proposed that he should continue an exile from London for ever, and spend all the remaining part of his life at Swansea; but he designed only to take the opportunity, which their scheme offered him, of retreating for a short time, that he might prepare his play for the stage, and his other works for the press, and then to return to London to exhibit

his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

With regard to his works, he proposed very great improvements, which would have required much time, or great application ; and when he had finished them, he designed to do justice to his subscribers, by publishing them according to his proposals.

As he was ready to entertain himself with future pleasures, he had planned out a scheme of life for the country, of which he had no knowledge but from pastorals and songs. He imagined that he should be transported to scenes of flowery felicity, like those which one poet has reflected to another ; and had projected a perpetual round of innocent pleasures, of which he suspected no interruption from pride, or ignorance, or brutality.

With these expectations he was so enchanted, that when he was once gently reproached by a friend for submitting to live upon a subscription, and advised rather by a resolute exertion of his abilities to support himself, he could not bear to debar himself from the happiness which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or lose the opportunity of
listening,

listening, without intermission, to the melody of the nightingale, which he believed was to be heard from every bramble, and which he did not fail to mention as a very important part of the happiness of a country life.

While this scheme was ripening, his friends directed him to take a lodging in the liberties of the Fleet, that he might be secure from his creditors, and sent him every Monday a guinea, which he commonly spent before the next morning, and trusted after his usual manner the remaining part of the week to the bounty of fortune.

He now began very sensibly to feel the miseries of dependence. Those by whom he was to be supported began to prescribe to him with an air of authority, which he knew not how decently to resent, nor patiently to bear; and he soon discovered, from the conduct of most of his subscribers, that he was yet in the hands of "little creatures."

Of the insolence that he was obliged to suffer, he gave many instances, of which none appeared to raise his indignation to a greater height, than the method which was taken of furnishing him with cloaths. Instead of con-

sulting him, and allowing him to send a taylor his orders for what they thought proper to allow him, they proposed to send for a taylor to take his measure, and then to consult how they should equip him.

This treatment was not very delicate, nor was it such as Savage's humanity would have suggested to him on a like occasion ; but it had scarcely deserved mention, had it not, by affecting him in an uncommon degree, shewn the peculiarity of his character. Upon hearing the design that was formed, he came to the lodging of a friend with the most violent agonies of rage ; and, being asked what it could be that gave him such disturbance, he replied with the utmost vehemence of indignation, " That they had sent for a taylor to measure him."

How the affair ended was never enquired, for fear of renewing his uneasiness. It is probable, that, upon recollection, he submitted with a good grace to what he could not avoid, and that he discovered no resentment where he had no power.

He was, however, not humbled to implicit and universal compliance ; for when the gentleman, who had first informed him of the design

sign to support him by a subscription, attempted to procure a reconciliation with the Lord Tyrconnel, he could by no means be prevailed upon to comply with the measures that were proposed.

A letter was written for him * to Sir William Lemon, to prevail upon him to interpose his good offices with Lord Tyrconnel, in which he solicited Sir William's assistance "for a man who really needed it as much as any man could well do;" and informed him, that he was retiring "for ever to a place where he should no more trouble his relations, friends, or enemies;" he confessed, that his passion had betrayed him to some conduct with regard to Lord Tyrconnel, for which he could not but heartily ask his pardon; and as he imagined Lord Tyrconnel's passion might be yet so high, that he would not "receive a letter from him," begged that Sir William would endeavour to soften him; and expressed his hopes that he would comply with his request, and that "so small a relation would not harden his heart against him."

* By Mr. Pope. Dr. J.

That any man should presume to dictate a letter to him, was not very agreeable to Mr. Savage; and therefore he was, before he had opened it, not much inclined to approve it. But when he read it, he found it contained sentiments entirely opposite to his own, and, as he asserted, to the truth; and therefore, instead of copying it, wrote his friend a letter full of masculine resentment and warm expostulations. He very justly observed, that the style was too supplicatory, and the representation too abject, and that he ought at least to have made him complain with "the dignity of a gentleman in distress." He declared that he would not write the paragraph in which he was to ask Lord Tyrconnel's pardon; for, "he despised his pardon, and therefore could not heartily, and would not hypocritically, ask it." He remarked that his friend made a very unreasonable distinction between himself and him; for, says he, "when you mention men of high rank in your own character," they are "those little creatures whom we are pleased to call the great;" but when you address them "in mine," no servility is sufficiently humble. He then with great propriety explained the ill consequences

consequences which might be expected from such a letter, which his relations would print in their own defence, and which would for ever be produced as a full answer to all that he should alledge against them; for he always intended to publish a minute account of the treatment which he had received. It is to be remembered, to the honour of the gentleman by whom this letter was drawn up, that he yielded to Mr. Savage's reasons, and agreed that it ought to be suppressed.

After many alterations and delays, a subscription was at length raised, which did not amount to fifty pounds a year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman*; such was the generosity of mankind, that what had been done by a player without solicitation, could not now be effected by application and interest; and Savage had a great number to court and to obey for a pension less than that which Mrs. Oldfield paid him without exacting any servilities.

Mr. Savage however was satisfied, and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance,

* Mr. Pope. E.

though scanty, would be more than sufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid œconomist, and to live according to the exact rules of frugality ; for nothing was in his opinion more contemptible than a man, who, when he knew his income, exceeded it ; and yet he confessed, that instances of such folly were too common, and lamented that some men were not to be trusted with their own money.

Full of these salutary resolutions, he left London in July 1739, having taken leave with great tenderness of his friends, and parted from the author of this narrative with tears in his eyes. He was furnished with fifteen guineas, and informed, that they would be sufficient, not only for the expence of his journey, but for his support in Wales for some time ; and that there remained but little more of the first collection. He promised a strict adherence to his maxims of parsimony, and went away in the stage-coach ; nor did his friends expect to hear from him, till he informed them of his arrival at Swansea.

But when they least expected, arrived a letter dated the fourteenth day after his departure, in
which

which he sent them word, that he was yet upon the road, and without money; and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then sent him the money that was in their hands, with which he was enabled to reach Bristol, from whence he was to go to Swansea by water.

At Bristol he found an embargo laid upon the shipping, so that he could not immediately obtain a passage; and being therefore obliged to stay there some time, he with his usual felicity ingratiated himself with many of the principal inhabitants, was invited to their houses, distinguished at their publick feasts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore easily engaged his affection.

He began very early after his retirement to complain of the conduct of his friends in London, and irritated many of them so much by his letters, that they withdrew, however honourably, their contributions; and it is believed, that little more was paid him than the twenty pounds a year, which were allowed him by the gentleman who proposed the subscription.

After some stay at Bristol he retired to Swansea, the place originally proposed for his residence,

dence, where he lived about a year, very much dissatisfied with the diminution of his salary; but contracted, as in other places, acquaintance with those who were most distinguished in that country, among whom he has celebrated Mr. Powel and Mrs. Jones, by some verses which he inserted in "The Gentleman's Magazine*."

Here he completed his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London; and was desirous of coming to town, to bring it upon the stage. This design was very warmly opposed; and he was advised, by his chief benefactor, to put it into the hands of Mr. Thomson and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the stage, and to allow his friends to receive the profits, out of which an annual pension should be paid him.

This proposal he rejected with the utmost contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgement of those, to whom he was required to submit, was superior to his own. He was now determined, as he expressed it, to be "no longer kept in leading-strings," and had no elevated idea of "his bounty, who proposed to pension him out of the profits of his own labours."

* Reprinted in the present collection.

He attempted in Wales to promote a subscription for his works, and had once hopes of success; but in a short time afterwards formed a resolution of leaving that part of the country, to which he thought it not reasonable to be confined for the gratification of those, who, having promised him a liberal income, had no sooner banished him to a remote corner, than they reduced his allowance to a salary scarcely equal to the necessities of life.

His resentment of this treatment, which, in his own opinion at least, he had not deserved, was such, that he broke off all correspondence with most of his contributors, and appeared to consider them as persecutors and oppressors; and in the latter part of his life declared, that their conduct toward him, since his departure from London, "had been perfidiousness im-
" proving on perfidiousness, and inhumanity
" on inhumanity."

It is not to be supposed, that the necessities of Mr. Savage did not sometimes incite him to satirical exaggerations of the behaviour of those by whom he thought himself reduced to them. But it must be granted, that the diminution of his allowance was a great hardship, and that
those

those who withdrew their subscription from a man, who, upon the faith of their promise, had gone into a kind of banishment, and abandoned all those by whom he had been before relieved in his distresses, will find it no easy task to vindicate their conduct.

It may be alledged, and perhaps justly, that he was petulant and contemptuous, that he more frequently reproached his subscribers for not giving him more, than thanked them for what he received; but it is to be remembered, that his conduct, and this is the worst charge that can be drawn up against him, did them no real injury; and that it therefore ought rather to have been pitied than resented; at least, the resentment it might provoke ought to have been generous and manly; epithets which his conduct will hardly deserve that starves the man whom he has persuaded to put himself into his power.

It might have been reasonably demanded by Savage, that they should, before they had taken away what they promised, have replaced him in his former state, that they should have taken no advantages from the situation to which the appearance of their kindness had reduced him,
and

and that he should have been recalled to London before he was abandoned. He might justly represent, that he ought to have been considered as a lion in the toils, and demand to be released before the dogs should be loosed upon him.

He endeavoured, indeed, to release himself, and, with an intent to return to London, went to Bristol, where a repetition of the kindness which he had formerly found invited him to stay. He was not only caressed and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately departed for London; but his negligence did not suffer him to consider, that such proofs of kindness were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was in a great degree the effect of novelty, and might, probably, be every day less; and therefore he took no care to improve the happy time, but was encouraged by one favour to hope for another, till at length generosity was exhausted, and officiousness wearied.

Another part of his misconduct was the practice of prolonging his visits to unseasonable

able hours, and disconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error, in a place of commerce, which all the charms of his conversation could not compensate; for what trader would purchase such airy satisfaction by the loss of solid gain, which must be the consequence of midnight merriment, as those hours which were gained at night were generally lost in the morning?

Thus Mr. Savage, after the curiosity of the inhabitants was gratified, found the number of his friends daily decreasing, perhaps without suspecting for what reason their conduct was altered; for he still continued to harass, with his nocturnal intrusions, those that yet countenanced him, and admitted him to their houses.

But he did not spend all the time of his residence at Bristol in visits or at taverns, for he sometimes returned to his studies, and began several considerable designs. When he felt an inclination to write, he always retired from the knowledge of his friends, and lay hid in an obscure part of the suburbs, till he found himself again desirous of company, to which it is
likely

likely that intervals of absence made him more welcome.

He was always full of his design of returning to London, to bring his tragedy upon the stage; but having neglected to depart with the money that was raised for him, he could not afterwards procure a sum sufficient to defray the expences of his journey; nor perhaps would a fresh supply have had any other effect than, by putting immediate pleasures into his power, to have driven the thoughts of his journey out of his mind.

While he was thus spending the day in contriving a scheme for the morrow, distress stole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His conduct had already wearied some of those who were at first enamoured of his conversation; but he might, perhaps, still have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal success, had not the decay of his cloaths made it no longer consistent with their vanity to admit him to their tables, or to associate with him in publick places. He now began to find every man from home at whose house he called; and was therefore no longer able to procure the necessaries of life, but wandered
about

about the town, slighted and neglected, in quest of a dinner, which he did not always obtain.

To complete his misery, he was pursued by the officers for small debts which he had contracted; and was therefore obliged to withdraw from the small number of friends from whom he had still reason to hope for favours. His custom was to lie in bed the greatest part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmost privacy, and after having paid his visit return again before morning to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obscure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he suffered the utmost extremities of poverty, and often fasted so long that he was seized with faintness, and had lost his appetite, not being able to bear the smell of meat, till the action of his stomach was restored by a cordial.

In this distress, he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himself a decent coat, and determined to go to London, but unhappily spent his money at a favourite tavern. Thus was he again confined to Bristol, where he was every day hunted by

by bailiffs. In this exigence he once more found a friend, who sheltered him in his house, though at the usual inconveniences with which his company was attended; for he could neither be persuaded to go to bed in the night, nor to rise in the day.

It is observable, that in these various scenes of misery, he was always disengaged and cheerful: he at sometimes pursued his studies, and at others continued or enlarged his epistolary correspondence; nor was he ever so far dejected as to endeavour to procure an increase of his allowance by any other methods than accusations and reproaches.

He had now no longer any hopes of assistance from his friends at Bristol, who as merchants, and by consequence sufficiently studious of profit, cannot be supposed to have looked with much compassion upon negligence and extravagance, or to think any excellence equivalent to a fault of such consequence as neglect of œconomy. It is natural to imagine, that many of those, who would have relieved his real wants, were discouraged from the exertion of their benevolence by observation of the use which was made of their favours, and con-

viction that relief would only be momentary, and that the same necessity would quickly return.

At last he quitted the house of his friend, and returned to his lodging at the inn, still intending to set out in a few days for London; but on the 10th of January 1742-3, having been at supper with two of his friends, he was at his return to his lodgings arrested for a debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffee-house, and conducted to the house of a sheriff's officer. The account which he gives of this misfortune, in a letter to one of the gentlemen with whom he had supped, is too remarkable to be omitted.

“ It was not a little unfortunate for me, that
“ I spent yesterday's evening with you; be-
“ cause the hour hindered me from entering
“ on my new lodging; however, I have now
“ got one, but such an one as I believe nobody
“ would chuse.

“ I was arrested, at the suit of Mrs. Read,
“ just as I was going up stairs to bed, at Mr.
“ Bowyer's; but taken in so private a manner,
“ that I believe nobody at the White Lion is
“ apprised of it. Though I let the officers
“ know

‘ know the strength (or rather weakness) of
“ my pocket, yet they treated me with the ut-
“ most civility; and even when they con-
“ ducted me to confinement, it was in such a
“ manner, that I verily believe I could have
“ escaped, which I would rather be ruined than
“ have done, notwithstanding the whole a-
“ mount of my finances was but three pence
“ halfpenny.

“ In the first place I must insist, that you
“ will industriously conceal this from Mrs.
“ S——s, because I would not have her good-
“ nature suffer that pain, which, I know, she
“ would be apt to feel on this occasion.

“ Next, I conjure you, dear Sir, by all the
“ ties of friendship, by no means to have one
“ uneasy thought on my account: but to have
“ the same pleasantry of countenance, and un-
“ ruffled serenity of mind, which (God be
“ praised!) I have in this, and have had in a
“ much severer calamity. Furthermore, I
“ charge you, if you value my friendship as
“ truly as I do yours, not to utter, or even
“ harbour, the least resentment against Mrs.
“ Read. I believe she has ruined me, but I
“ freely forgive her; and (though I will never

“ more have any intimacy with her) I would,
“ at a due distance, rather do her an act of
“ good, than ill will. Lastly (pardon the ex-
“ pression) I absolutely command you not to
“ offer me any pecuniary assistance, nor to at-
“ tempt getting me any from any one of your
“ friends. At another time, or on any other
“ occasion, you may, dear friend, be well as-
“ sured, I would rather write to you in the
“ submissive style of a request, than that of a
“ peremptory command.

“ However, that my truly valuable friend
“ may not think I am too proud to ask a fa-
“ vour, let me entreat you to let me have your
“ boy to attend me for this day, not only for
“ the sake of saving me the expence of porters,
“ but for the delivery of some letters to people
“ whose names I would not have known to
“ strangers.

“ The civil treatment I have thus far met
“ from those whose prisoner I am, makes me
“ thankful to the Almighty, that though he
“ has thought fit to visit me (on my birth-
“ night) with affliction, yet (such is his great
“ goodness !) my affliction is not without al-
“ leviating circumstances. I murmur not ;
“ but

“ but am all resignation to the divine will. As
“ to the world, I hope that I shall be endued
“ by Heaven with that presence of mind,
“ that serene dignity in misfortune, that con-
“ stitutes the character of a true nobleman ; a
“ dignity far beyond that of coronets ; a no-
“ bility arising from the just principles of phi-
“ losophy, refined and exalted by those of
“ Christianity.”

He continued five days at the officer's, in hopes that he should be able to procure bail, and avoid the necessity of going to prison. The state in which he passed his time, and the treatment which he received, are very justly expressed by him in a letter which he wrote to a friend : “ The whole day,” says he, “ has
“ been employed in various people's filling my
“ head with their foolish chimerical systems,
“ which has obliged me coolly (as far as nature
“ will admit) to digest, and accommodate myself
“ to every different person's way of thinking ;
“ hurried from one wild system to another,
“ till it has quite made a chaos of my
“ imagination, and nothing done — pro-
“ mised — disappointed — ordered to send,

“every hour, from one part of the town to
“the other.”

When his friends, who had hitherto caressed and applauded, found that to give bail and pay the debt was the same, they all refused to preserve him from a prison at the expence of eight pounds ; and therefore, after having been for some time at the officer's house, “at an immense expence,” as he observes in his letter, he was at length removed to Newgate.

This expence he was enabled to support by the generosity of Mr. Nash at Bath, who, upon receiving from him an account of his condition, immediately sent him five guineas, and promised to promote his subscription at Bath with all his interest.

By his removal to Newgate, he obtained at least a freedom from suspense, and rest from the disturbing vicissitudes of hope and disappointment ; he now found that his friends were only companions, who were willing to share his gaiety, but not to partake of his misfortunes ; and therefore he no longer expected any assistance from them.

It

It must however be observed of one gentleman, that he offered to release him by paying the debt; but that Mr. Savage would not consent, I suppose because he thought he had before been too burthensome to him.

He was offered by some of his friends, that a collection should be made for his enlargement; but he "treated the proposal," and declared * "he should again treat it, with disdain. As to writing any mendicant letters, "he had too high a spirit, and determined "only to write to some ministers of state, to "try to regain his pension."

He continued to complain † of those that had sent him into the country, and objected to them, that he had "lost the profits of his "play, which had been finished three years;" and in another letter declares his resolution to publish a pamphlet, that the world might know how "he had been used."

This pamphlet was never written; for he in a very short time recovered his usual tranquillity,

* In a letter after his confinement. Dr. J.

† Letter, Jan. 15.

and cheerfully applied himself to more inoffensive studies. He indeed steadily declared, that he was promised a yearly allowance of fifty pounds, and never received half the sum; but he seemed to resign himself to that as well as to other misfortunes, and lose the remembrance of it in his amusements and employments.

The cheerfulness with which he bore his confinement appears from the following letter, which he wrote, January the 30th, to one of his friends in London:

“ I now write to you from my confinement
“ in Newgate, where I have been ever since
“ Monday last was se’nnight, and where I en-
“ joy myself with much more tranquillity than
“ I have known for upwards of a twelvemonth
“ past; having a room entirely to myself,
“ and pursuing the amusement of my poetical
“ studies, uninterrupted and agreeable to my
“ mind. I thank the Almighty, I am now all
“ collected in myself; and, though my person
“ is in confinement, my mind can expatiate on
“ ample and useful subjects with all the free-
“ dom imaginable. I am now more conversant
“ with the Nine than ever, and if, instead of
“ a Newgate-bird, I may be allowed to be a
“ bird

“bird of the Muses, I assure you, Sir, I sing
“very freely in my cage; sometimes indeed in
“the plaintive notes of the nightingale; but
“at others in the cheerful strains of the
“lark.”

In another letter he observes, that he ranges from one subject to another, without confining himself to any particular task; and that he was employed one week upon one attempt, and the next upon another.

Surely the fortitude of this man deserves, at least, to be mentioned with applause; and, whatever faults may be imputed to him, the virtue of suffering well cannot be denied him. The two powers which, in the opinion of Epictetus, constituted a wise man, are those of bearing and forbearing, which it cannot indeed be affirmed to have been equally possessed by Savage; and indeed the want of one obliged him very frequently to practise the other.

He was treated by Mr. Dagge, the keeper of the prison, with great humanity; was supported by him at his own table, without any certainty of recompence; had a room to himself, to which he could at any time retire from all disturbance; was allowed to stand at the
door

door of the prison, and sometimes taken out into the fields * ; so that he suffered fewer hardships in prison than he had been accustomed to undergo in the greatest part of his life.

The keeper did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made some overtures to the creditor for his release, though without effect ; and continued, during the whole time of his imprisonment, to treat him with the utmost tenderness and civility.

Virtue is undoubtedly most laudable in that state which makes it most difficult ; and therefore the humanity of a gaoler certainly deserves this public attestation ; and the man, whose heart has not been hardened by such an employment, may be justly proposed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inscription was once engraved “ to the honest toll-gatherer,” less honours ought not be paid “ to the tender gaoler.”

Mr. Savage very frequently received visits, and sometimes presents from his acquaintances ; but they did not amount to a subsistence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generosity of this keeper ; but these favours,

* See this confirmed, *Gent. Mag.* vol. LVII. 1140. N.
however

however they might endear to him the particular persons from whom he received them, were very far from impressing upon his mind any advantageous ideas of the people of Bristol, and therefore he thought he could not more properly employ himself in prison, than in writing a poem called "London and Bristol delineated*."

When he had brought this poem to its present state, which, without considering the chasm, is not perfect, he wrote to London an account of his design, and informed his friend †, that he was determined to print it with his name; but enjoined him not to communicate his intention to his Bristol acquaintance. The gentleman, surprised at his resolution, endeavoured to dissuade him from publishing it, at least from prefixing his name; and declared, that he could not reconcile the injunction of secrecy with his resolution to own it at its first appearance. To this Mr. Savage returned an answer agreeable to his character, in the following terms:

* The Author preferred this title to that of "London and Bristol compared;" which, when he began the piece, he intended to prefix to it. Dr. J.

† This friend was Mr. Cave the printer. N.

“ I received yours this morning ; and not
 “ without a little surprize at the contents. To
 “ answer a question with a question, you ask
 “ me concerning London and Bristol, Why
 “ will I add *delin-ated*? Why did Mr. Wool-
 “ aston add the same word to his RELIGION
 “ OF NATURE? I suppose that it was his will
 “ and pleasure to add it in his case ; and it is
 “ mine to do so in my own. You are pleased
 “ to tell me, that you understand not why fe-
 “ crecy is enjoined, and yet I intend to set my
 “ name to it. My answer is—I have my pri-
 “ vate reasons, which I am not obliged to ex-
 “ plain to any one. You doubt my friend
 “ Mr. S——* would not approve of it—And
 “ what is it to me whether he does or not! Do
 “ you imagine that Mr. S—— is to dictate to
 “ me? if any man who calls himself my friend
 “ should assume such an air, I would spurn at
 “ his friendship with contempt. You say,
 “ I seem to think so by not letting him know
 “ it—And suppose I do, what then? Perhaps
 “ I can give reasons for that disapprobation,
 “ very foreign from what you would imagine.

* Mr. Strong, of the Post-office. N.

“ You

“ You go on in saying, Suppose I should not
“ put my name to it—My answer is, that I
“ will not suppose any such thing, being de-
“ termined to the contrary: neither, Sir, would
“ I have you suppose, that I applied to you
“ for want of another press; nor would I have
“ you imagine, that I owe Mr. S—— obliga-
“ tions which I do not.”

Such was his imprudence, and such his ob-
stinate adherence to his own resolutions, how-
ever absurd. A prisoner! supported by charity!
and, whatever insults he might have received
during the latter part of his stay at Bristol, once
caressed, esteemed, and presented with a liberal
collection, he could forget on a sudden his
danger and his obligations, to gratify the petu-
lance of his wit, or the eagerness of his resent-
ment, and publish a satire, by which he might
reasonably expect that he should alienate those
who then supported him, and provoke those
whom he could neither resist nor escape.

This resolution, from the execution of which
it is probable that only his death could have
hindered him, is sufficient to shew, how much
he disregarded all considerations that opposed
his present passions, and how readily he ha-
zarded

zarded all future advantages for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his predominant inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it; nor had opposition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence.

This performance was however laid aside, while he was employed in soliciting assistance from several great persons; and one interruption succeeding another, hindered him from supplying the chasm, and perhaps from retouching the other parts, which he can hardly be imagined to have finished in his own opinion; for it is very unequal, and some of the lines are rather inserted to rhyme to others, than to support or improve the sense; but the first and last parts are worked up with great spirit and elegance.

His time was spent in the prison for the most part in study, or in receiving visits; but sometimes he descended to lower amusements, and diverted himself in the kitchen with the conversation of the criminals; for it was not pleasing to him to be much without company; and though he was very capable of a judicious choice, he was often contented with the first that offered; for this he was sometimes
reproved

reproved by his friends, who found him surrounded with felons : but the reproof was on that, as on other occasions, thrown away ; he continued to gratify himself, and to set very little value on the opinion of others.

But here, as in every other scene of his life, he made use of such opportunities as occurred of benefiting those who were more miserable than himself, and was always ready to perform any office of humanity to his fellow-prisoners.

He had now ceased from corresponding with any of his subscribers except one, who yet continued to remit him the twenty pounds a year which he had promised him, and by whom it was expected that he would have been in a very short time enlarged, because he had directed the keeper to enquire after the state of his debts.

However, he took care to enter his name according to the forms of the court *, that the creditor might be obliged to make him some allowance, if he was continued a prisoner, and, when on that occasion he appeared in the hall, was treated with very unusual respect.

* See Gent. Mag. vol. LVII. p. 1040.

But the resentment of the city was afterwards raised by some accounts that had been spread of the satire; and he was informed that some of the merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a prisoner at their own expence. This he treated as an empty menace; and perhaps might have hastened the publication, only to shew how much he was superior to their insults, had not all his schemes been suddenly destroyed.

When he had been six months in prison, he received from one of his friends*, in whose kindness he had the greatest confidence, and on whose assistance he chiefly depended, a letter, that contained a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in such terms as sudden resentment dictated. Henley, in one of his advertisements, had mentioned "Pope's treatment of Savage." This was supposed by Pope to be the consequence of a complaint made by Savage to Henley, and was therefore mentioned by him with much resentment. Mr. Savage returned a very solemn protestation of

* Mr. Pope. See some extracts of letters from that gentleman to and concerning Mr. Savage, in Ruffhead's Life of Pope, p. 502. E.

his innocence, but however appeared much disturbed at the accusation. Some days afterwards he was seized with a pain in his back and side, which, as it was not violent, was not suspected to be dangerous ; but growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himself to his room, and a fever seized his spirits. The symptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any assistance. The last time that the keeper saw him was on July the 31st, 1743 ; when Savage, seeing him at his bed-side, said, with an uncommon earnestness, " I have something to say to you, Sir ;" but, after a pause, moved his hand in a melancholy manner ; and, finding himself unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, said, " 'Tis gone !" The keeper soon after left him ; and the next morning he died. He was buried in the church-yard of St. Peter, at the expence of the keeper.

Such were the life and death of Richard Savage, a man equally distinguished by his virtues and vices ; and at once remarkable for his weaknesses and abilities.

He was of a middle stature, of a thin habit of body, a long visage, coarse features, and melancholy aspect ; of a grave and manly deportment, a solemn dignity of mien, but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, softened into an engaging easiness of manners. His walk was slow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was easily excited to smiles, but very seldom provoked to laughter.

His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active. His judgement was accurate, his apprehension quick, and his memory so tenacious, that he was frequently observed to know what he had learned from others in a short time, better than those by whom he was informed ; and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumstances, which few would have regarded at the present time, but which the quickness of his apprehension impressed upon him. He had the art of escaping from his own reflections, and accommodating himself to every new scene.

To this quality is to be imputed the extent of his knowledge, compared with the small time which he spent in visible endeavours to acquire

acquire it. He mingled in cursory conversation with the same steadiness of attention as others apply to a lecture; and amidst the appearance of thoughtless gaiety, lost no new idea that was started, nor any hint that could be improved. He had therefore made in coffee-houses the same proficiency as others in their closets: and it is remarkable, that the writings of a man of little education and little reading have an air of learning scarcely to be found in any other performances, but which perhaps as often obscures as embellishes them.

His judgement was eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment; and it is not without some satisfaction, that I can produce the suffrage of Savage in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain such odious ideas as some, who perhaps had neither his judgement nor experience, have published, either in ostentation of their sagacity, vindication of their crimes or gratification of their malice.

His method of life particularly qualified him for conversation, of which he knew how to practise all the graces. He was never vehement

or loud, but at once modest and easy, open and respectful; his language was vivacious or elegant, and equally happy upon grave and humorous subjects. He was generally censured for not knowing when to retire; but that was not the defect of his judgement, but of his fortune: when he left his company, he was frequently to spend the remaining part of the night in the street, or at least was abandoned to gloomy reflections, which it is not strange that he delayed as long as he could; and sometimes forgot that he gave others pain to avoid it himself.

It cannot be said, that he made use of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct: an irregular and dissipated manner of life had made him the slave of every passion that happened to be excited by the presence of its object, and that slavery to his passions reciprocally produced a life irregular and dissipated. He was not master of his own motions, nor could promise any thing for the next day.

With regard to his œconomy, nothing can be added to the relation of his life. He appeared to think himself born to be supported by others, and dispensed from all necessity of providing

providing for himself; he therefore never prosecuted any scheme of advantage, nor endeavoured even to secure the profits which his writings might have afforded him. His temper was, in consequence of the dominion of his passions, uncertain and capricious; he was easily engaged, and easily disgusted; but he is accused of retaining his hatred more tenaciously than his benevolence.

He was compassionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of humanity; but when he was provoked (and very small offences were sufficient to provoke him), he would prosecute his revenge with the utmost acrimony till his passion had subsided.

His friendship was therefore of little value; for though he was zealous in the support or vindication of those whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to trust him, because he considered himself as discharged by the first quarrel from all ties of honour or gratitude; and would betray those secrets which in the warmth of confidence had been imparted to him. This practice drew upon him an universal accusation of ingratitude: nor can it be denied that he was very ready to set himself

free from the load of an obligation; for he could not bear to conceive himself in a state of dependence, his pride being equally powerful with his other passions, and appearing in the form of insolence at one time, and of vanity at another. Vanity, the most innocent species of pride, was most frequently predominant: he could not easily leave off, when he had once begun to mention himself or his works; nor ever read his verses without stealing his eyes from the page to discover in the faces of his audience how they were affected with any favourite passage.

A kinder name than that of vanity ought to be given to the delicacy with which he was always careful to separate his own merit from every other man's, and to reject that praise to which he had no claim. He did not forget, in mentioning his performances, to mark every line that had been suggested or amended; and was so accurate, as to relate that he owed *three words* in "The Wanderer" to the advice of his friends.

His veracity was questioned, but with little reason; his accounts, though not indeed always the same, were generally consistent. When he
loved

loved any man, he suppressed all his faults; and when he had been offended by him, concealed all his virtues: but his characters were generally true, so far as he proceeded; though it cannot be denied, that his partiality might have sometimes the effect of falsehood.

In cases indifferent, he was zealous for virtue, truth, and justice: he knew very well the necessity of goodness to the present and future happiness of mankind; nor is there perhaps any writer, who has less endeavoured to please by flattering the appetites or perverting the judgement.

As an author, therefore, and he now ceases to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had resolved to suppress be excepted, he has very little to fear from the strictest moral or religious censure. And though he may not be altogether secure against the objections of the critic, it must however be acknowledged, that his works are the productions of a genius truly poetical; and, what many writers who have been more lavishly applauded cannot boast, that they have an original air, which has no resemblance of any foregoing writer, that the verbiage and sen-

timents have a cast peculiar to themselves, which no man can imitate with success, because what was nature in Savage, would in another be affectation. It must be confessed, that his descriptions are striking, his images animated, his fictions justly imagined, and his allegories artfully pursued; that his diction is elevated, though sometimes forced, and his numbers sonorous and majestic, though frequently sluggish and encumbered. Of his style, the general fault is harshness, and its general excellence is dignity; of his sentiments, the prevailing beauty is simplicity, and uniformity the prevailing defect.

For his life, or for his writings, none, who candidly consider his fortune, will think an apology either necessary or difficult. If he was not always sufficiently instructed in his subject, his knowledge was at least greater than could have been attained by others in the same state. If his works were sometimes unfinished, accuracy cannot reasonably be exacted from a man oppressed with want, which he has no hope of relieving but by a speedy publication. The insolence and resentment of which he is accused were not easily to be avoided by a great mind
irritated

irritated by perpetual hardships, and constrained hourly to return the spurns of contempt, and repress the insolence of prosperity; and vanity surely may be readily pardoned in him, to whom life afforded no other comforts than barren praises, and the consciousness of deserving them.

Those are no proper judges of his conduct, who have slumbered away their time on the down of plenty; nor will any wise man easily presume to say, "Had I been in Savage's condition, I should have lived or written better than Savage."

This relation will not be wholly without its use, if those, who languish under any part of his sufferings, shall be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only those afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or those, who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, shall be reminded, that nothing will supply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity, long continued, will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

SWIFT.

S W I F T.

AN Account of Dr. Swift has been already collected, with great diligence and acuteness, by Dr. Hawkesworth, according to a scheme which I laid before him in the intimacy of our friendship. I cannot therefore be expected to say much of a life, concerning which I had long since communicated my thoughts to a man capable of dignifying his narrations with so much elegance of language and force of sentiment.

JONATHAN SWIFT was, according to an account said to be * written by himself, the son of Jonathan Swift, an attorney, and was

* Mr. Sheridan in his Life of Swift observes, that this account was really written by the Dean, and now exists in his own hand-writing in the library of Dublin College. E.

born

born at Dublin on St. Andrew's day, 1667: according to his own report, as delivered by Pope to Spence, he was born at Leicester, the son of a clergyman, who was minister of a parish in Herefordshire *. During his life the place of his birth was undetermined. He was contented to be called an Irishman by the Irish; but would occasionally call himself an Englishman. The question may, without much regret, be left in the obscurity in which he delighted to involve it.

Whatever was his birth, his education was Irish. He was sent at the age of six to the school at Kilkenny, and in his fifteenth year (1682) was admitted into the University of Dublin.

In his academical studies he was either not diligent or not happy. It must disappoint every reader's expectation, that, when at the usual time he claimed the Bachelorship of Arts, he was found by the examiners too conspicuously deficient for regular admission, and obtained his degree at last by *special favour*, a term used in that university to denote want of merit.

* Spence's Anecdotes, vol. II. p. 273.

Of this disgrace it may be easily supposed that he was much ashamed, and shame had its proper effect in producing reformation. He resolved from that time to study eight hours a-day, and continued his industry for seven years, with what improvement is sufficiently known. This part of his story well deserves to be remembered; it may afford useful admonition and powerful encouragement to men, whose abilities have been made for a time useless by their passions or pleasures, and who, having lost one part of life in idleness, are tempted to throw away the remainder in despair.

In this course of daily application he continued three years longer at Dublin; and in this time, if the observation of an old companion may be trusted, he drew the first sketch of his "Tale of a Tub."

When he was about one-and-twenty (1688), being by the death of Godwin Swift his uncle, who had supported him, left without subsistence, he went to consult his mother, who then lived at Leicester, about the future course of his life, and by her direction solicited the advice and patronage of Sir William Temple, who

who had married one of Mrs. Swift's relations, and whose father Sir John Temple, Master of the Rolls in Ireland, had lived in great familiarity of friendship with Godwin Swift, by whom Jonathan had been to that time maintained.

Temple received with sufficient kindness the nephew of his father's friend, with whom he was, when they conversed together, so much pleased, that he detained him two years in his house. Here he became known to King William, who sometimes visited Temple when he was disabled by the gout, and, being attended by Swift in the garden, shewed him how to cut asparagus in the Dutch way.

King William's notions were all military; and he expressed his kindness to Swift by offering to make him a captain of horse.

When Temple removed to Moor-park, he took Swift with him; and when he was consulted by the Earl of Portland about the expedience of complying with a bill then depending for making parliaments triennial, against which King William was strongly prejudiced, after having in vain tried to shew the Earl that the proposal involved nothing dangerous to royal power,

power, he sent Swift for the same purpose to the King. Swift, who probably was proud of his employment, and went with all the confidence of a young man, found his arguments, and his art of displaying them, made totally ineffectual by the predetermination of the King; and used to mention this disappointment as his first antidote against vanity.

Before he left Ireland he contracted a disorder, as he thought, by eating too much fruit. The original of diseases is commonly obscure. Almost every boy eats as much fruit as he can get, without any great inconvenience. The disease of Swift was giddiness with deafness, which attacked him from time to time, began very early, pursued him through life, and at last sent him to the grave, deprived of reason.

Being much oppressed at Moor-park by this grievous malady, he was advised to try his native air, and went to Ireland; but, finding no benefit, returned to Sir William, at whose house he continued his studies, and is known to have read, among other books, "Cyprian" and "Irenæus." He thought exercise of great necessity, and used to run half a mile up and down a hill every two hours.

It

It is easy to imagine that the mode in which his first degree was conferred left him no great fondness for the University of Dublin, and therefore he resolved to become a Master of Arts at Oxford. In the testimonial which he produced, the words of disgrace were omitted; and he took his Master's degree (July 5, 1692) with such reception and regard as fully contented him.

While he lived with Temple, he used to pay his mother at Leicester an yearly visit. He travelled on foot, unless some violence of weather drove him into a waggon, and at night he would go to a penny lodging, where he purchased clean sheets for six pence. This practice Lord Orrery imputes to his innate love of grossness and vulgarity: some may ascribe it to his desire of surveying human life through all its varieties; and others, perhaps with equal probability, to a passion which seems to have been deep fixed in his heart, the love of a shilling.

In time he began to think that his attendance at Moor-park deserved some other recompence than the pleasure, however mingled with improvement, of Temple's conversation; and
grew

grew so impatient, that (1694) he went away in discontent.

Temple, conscious of having given reason for complaint, is said to have made him Deputy Master of the Rolls in Ireland; which, according to his kinsman's account, was an office which he knew him not able to discharge. Swift therefore resolved to enter into the Church, in which he had at first no higher hopes than of the chaplainship to the Factory at Lisbon; but being recommended to Lord Capel, he obtained the prebend of *Kilroot* in *Connor*, of about a hundred pounds a year.

But the infirmities of Temple made a companion like Swift so necessary, that he invited him back, with a promise to procure him English preferment, in exchange for the prebend which he desired him to resign. With this request Swift complied, having perhaps equally repented their separation, and they lived on together with mutual satisfaction; and, in the four years that passed between his return and Temple's death, it is probable that he wrote the "Tale of a Tub" and the "Battle of the Books."

Swift

Swift began early to think, or to hope, that he was a poet, and wrote Pindarick Odes to Temple, to the King, and to the Athenian Society, a knot of obscure men*, who published a periodical pamphlet of answers to questions, sent, or supposed to be sent, by Letters. I have been told that Dryden, having perused these verses, said, "Cousin Swift, you will "never be a poet;" and that this denunciation was the motive of Swift's perpetual malevolence to Dryden.

In 1699 Temple died, and left a legacy with his manuscripts to Swift, for whom he had obtained, from King William, a promise of the first prebend that should be vacant at Westminster or Canterbury.

That this promise might not be forgotten, Swift dedicated to the King the posthumous works with which he was intrusted; but neither the dedication, nor tenderness for the man whom he once had treated with confidence and fondness, revived in King William the remembrance of his promise. Swift awhile attended the Court; but soon found his solicitations hopeless.

* The Publisher of this Collection was John Dunton. E.

He was then invited by the Earl of Berkeley to accompany him into Ireland, as his private secretary; but after having done the business till their arrival at Dublin, he then found that one Bush had persuaded the Earl that a Clergyman was not a proper secretary, and had obtained the office for himself. In a man like Swift, such circumvention and inconstancy must have excited violent indignation.

But he had yet more to suffer. Lord Berkeley had the disposal of the deanery of Derry, and Swift expected to obtain it; but by the secretary's influence, supposed to have been secured by a bribe, it was bestowed on somebody else; and Swift was dismissed with the livings of Laracor and Rathbeggin in the diocese of Meath, which together did not equal half the value of the deanery.

At Laracor he increased the parochial duty by reading prayers on Wednesdays and Fridays, and performed all the offices of his profession with great decency and exactness.

Soon after his settlement at Laracor, he invited to Ireland the unfortunate Stella, a young woman whose name was Johnson, the daughter of the steward of Sir William Temple, who,

who, in consideration of her father's virtues, left her a thousand pounds. With her came Mrs. Dingley, whose whole fortune was twenty-seven pounds a year for her life. With these Ladies he passed his hours of relaxation, and to them he opened his bosom; but they never resided in the same house, nor did he see either without a witness. They lived at the Parsonage, when Swift was away; and when he returned, removed to a lodging, or to the house of a neighbouring clergyman.

Swift was not one of those minds which amaze the world with early pregnancy: his first work, except his few poetical Essays, was the "Dissentions in Athens and Rome," published (1701) in his thirty-fourth year. After its appearance, paying a visit to some bishop, he heard mention made of the new pamphlet that Burnet had written, replete with political knowledge. When he seemed to doubt Burnet's right to the work, he was told by the Bishop, that he was "a young man;" and, still persisting to doubt, that he was "a very positive young man."

Three years afterward (1704) was published "The Tale of a Tub:" of this book charity

may be persuaded to think that it might be written by a man of a peculiar character, without ill intention; but it is certainly of dangerous example. That Swift was its author, though it be universally believed, was never owned by himself, nor very well proved by any evidence; but no other claimant can be produced, and he did not deny it when Archbishop Sharp and the Dukes of Somerset, by shewing it to the Queen, debarred him from a bishoprick.

When this wild work first raised the attention of the publick, Sacheverell, meeting Smalridge, tried to flatter him, seeming to think him the author; but Smalridge answered with indignation, "Not all that you and I have in the world, nor all that ever we shall have, should hire me to write the Tale of a Tub."

The digressions relating to Wotton and Bentley must be confessed to discover want of knowledge, or want of integrity; he did not understand the two controversies, or he willingly misrepresented them. But Wit can stand its ground against Truth only a little while. The honours due to Learning have been

been justly distributed by the decision of posterity.

“The Battle of the Books” is so like the “Combat des Livres,” which the same question concerning the Ancients and Moderns had produced in France, that the improbability of such a coincidence of thoughts without communication is not, in my opinion, balanced by the anonymous protestation prefixed, in which all knowledge of the French book is peremptorily disowned*.

For some time after Swift was probably employed in solitary study, gaining the qualifications requisite for future eminence. How often he visited England, and with what diligence he attended his parishes, I know not. It was not till about four years afterwards that he became a professed author; and then one year (1708) produced “The Sentiments of a Church-of-England Man;” the ridicule of Astrology, under the name of “Bickerstaff;” the “Argument against abolishing Christianity;” and the defence of the “Sacramental Test.”

* See Sheridan's Life, p. 451. where are some remarks on this passage. E.

“ The Sentiments of a Church-of-England
“ Man” is written with great coolness, mode-
ration, ease, and perspicuity. The “ Argu-
“ ment against abolishing Christianity” is a
very happy and judicious irony. One passage
in it deserves to be selected.

“ If Christianity were once abolished, how
“ could the free-thinkers, the strong reasoners
“ and the men of profound learning, be able to
“ find another subject so calculated, in all
“ points, whereon to display their abilities?
“ What wonderful productions of wit should
“ we be deprived of from those, whose genius,
“ by continual practice, hath been wholly
“ turned upon raillery and invectives against
“ religion, and would therefore never be able
“ to shine, or distinguish themselves, upon
“ any other subject? We are daily complain-
“ ing of the great decline of wit among us, and
“ would take away the greatest, perhaps the
“ only, topick we have left. Who would
“ ever have suspected Apgill for a wit, or
“ Toland for a philosopher, if the inexhausti-
“ ble stock of Christianity had not been at
“ hand to provide them with materials? What
“ other subject, through all art or nature,
“ could

“could have produced Tindal for a profound
 “author, or furnished him with readers? It is
 “the wise choice of the subject that alone
 “adorns and distinguishes the writer. For
 “had an hundred such pens as these been em-
 “ployed on the side of religion, they would
 “have immediately sunk into silence and
 “oblivion.”

The reasonableness of a *Test* is not hard to be proved; but perhaps it must be allowed that the proper test has not been chosen.

The attention paid to the papers, published under the name of “Bickerstaff,” induced Steele, when he projected the “Tatler,” to assume an appellation which had already gained possession of the reader’s notice.

In the year following he wrote a “Project for the Advancement of Religion,” addressed to Lady Berkeley; by whose kindness it is not unlikely that he was advanced to his benefices. To this project, which is formed with great purity of intention, and displayed with spriteness and elegance, it can only be objected, that, like many projects, it is, if not generally impracticable, yet evidently hopeless, as it supposes more zeal, concord, and perfe-

verance, than a view of mankind gives reason for expecting.

He wrote likewise this year a "Vindication of Bickerstaff;" and an explanation of an "Ancient Prophecy," part written after the facts, and the rest never completed, but well planned to excite amazement.

Soon after began the busy and important part of Swift's life. He was employed (1710) by the primate of Ireland to solicit the Queen for a remission of the First Fruits and Twentieth parts to the Irish Clergy. With this purpose he had recourse to Mr. Harley, to whom he was mentioned as a man neglected and oppressed by the last ministry, because he had refused to co-operate with some of their schemes. What he had refused has never been told; what he had suffered was, I suppose, the exclusion from a bishoprick by the remonstrances of Sharp, whom he describes as "the harmless tool of others hate," and whom he represents as afterwards "suing for pardon."

Harley's designs and situation were such as made him glad of an auxiliary so well qualified for his service; he therefore soon admitted him
to

to familiarity, whether ever to confidence some have made a doubt; but it would have been difficult to excite his zeal without persuading him that he was trusted, and not very easy to delude him by false persuasions.

He was certainly admitted to those meetings in which the first hints and original plan of action are supposed to have been formed; and was one of sixteen Ministers, or agents of the Ministry, who met weekly at each other's houses, and were united by the name of "Brother."

Being not immediately considered as an obdurate Tory, he conversed indiscriminately with all the wits, and was yet the friend of Steele; who, in the "Tatler," which began in April 1709, confesses the advantage of his conversation, and mentions something contributed by him to his paper. But he was now immersing into political controversy; for the year 1710 produced the "Examiner," of which Swift wrote thirty-three papers. In argument he may be allowed to have the advantage; for where a wide system of conduct, and the whole of a public character, is laid open to enquiry, the accuser having the choice of facts must be
very

very unskilful if he does not prevail; but with regard to wit, I am afraid none of Swift's papers will be found equal to those by which Addison opposed him*.

He wrote in the year 1711 a "Letter to the "October Club," a number of Tory Gentlemen sent from the country to Parliament, who formed themselves into a club, to the number of about a hundred, and met to animate the zeal and raise the expectations of each other. They thought, with great reason, that the Ministers were losing opportunities; that sufficient use was not made of the ardour of the nation; they called loudly for more changes, and stronger efforts; and demanded the punishment of part, and the dismissal of the rest, of those whom they considered as public robbers.

Their eagerness was not gratified by the Queen, or by Harley. The Queen was probably slow because she was afraid: and Harley was slow because he was doubtful; he was a tory only by necessity, or for convenience;

* Mr. Sheridan however says, that Addison's last Whig Examiner was published Oct. 12, 1711; and Swift's first Examiner, on the 10th of the following November. E.

and, when he had power in his hands, had no settled purpose for which he should employ it; forced to gratify to a certain degree the Tories who supported him, but unwilling to make his reconciliation to the Whigs utterly desperate, he corresponded at once with the two expectants of the Crown, and kept, as has been observed, the succession undetermined. Not knowing what to do, he did nothing: and, with the fate of a double dealer, at last he lost his power, but kept his enemies.

Swift seems to have concurred in opinion with the "October Club;" but it was not in his power to quicken the tardiness of Harley, whom he stimulated as much as he could, but with little effect. He that knows not whither to go, is in no haste to move. Harley, who was perhaps not quick by nature, became yet more slow by irresolution; and was content to hear that dilatoriness lamented as natural, which he applauded in himself as politick.

Without the Tories, however, nothing could be done; and as they were not to be gratified, they must be appeased; and the conduct of the Minister, if it could not be vindicated, was to be plausibly excused.

Early

Early in the next year he published a "Proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English Tongue," in a Letter to the Earl of Oxford; written without much knowledge of the general nature of language, and without any accurate enquiry into the history of other tongues. The certainty and stability which, contrary to all experience, he thinks attainable, he proposes to secure by instituting an academy; the decrees of which every man would have been willing, and many would have been proud, to disobey, and which, being renewed by successive elections, would in a short time have differed from itself.

Swift now attained the zenith of his political importance: he published (1712) the "Conduct of the Allies," ten days before the Parliament assembled. The purpose was to persuade the nation to a peace; and never had any writer more success. The people, who had been amused with bonfires and triumphal processions, and looked with idolatry on the General and his friends, and who, as they thought, had made England the arbitress of nations, were confounded between shame and rage, when they found "that mines had
" been

“ been exhausted, and millions destroyed,” to secure the Dutch or aggrandize the emperor, without any advantage to ourselves; that we had been bribing our neighbours to fight their own quarrel; and that amongst our enemies we might number our allies.

That is now no longer doubted, of which the nation was then first informed, that the war was unnecessarily protracted to fill the pockets of Marlborough; and that it would have been continued without end, if he could have continued his annual plunder. But Swift, I suppose, did not yet know what he has since written, that a commission was drawn which would have appointed him General for life, had it not become ineffectual by the resolution of Lord Cowper, who refused the seal.

“ Whatever is received,” say the schools, “ is received in proportion to the recipient.” The power of a political treatise depends much upon the disposition of the people; the nation was then combustible, and a spark set it on fire. It is boasted, that between November and January eleven thousand were sold; a great number at that time, when we were not yet a nation of readers. To its propagation certainly

no agency of power or influence was wanting. It furnished arguments for conversation, speeches for debate, and materials for parliamentary resolutions.

Yet, surely, whoever surveys this wonder-working pamphlet with cool perusal, will confess that its efficacy was supplied by the passions of its readers; that it operates by the mere weight of facts, with very little assistance from the hand that produced them.

This year (1712) he published his "Reflections on the Barrier Treaty," which carries on this design of his "Conduct of the Allies," and shews how little regard in that negotiation had been shewn to the interest of England, and how much of the conquered country had been demanded by the Dutch.

This was followed by "Remarks on the Bishop of Sarum's Introduction to his third Volume of the History of the Reformation;" a pamphlet which Burnet published as an alarm, to warn the nation of the approach of Popery. Swift, who seems to have disliked the Bishop with something more than political aversion, treats him like one on whom he is glad of an opportunity to insult.

Swift

Swift being now the declared favourite and supposed confidant of the Tory Ministry, was treated by all that depended on the Court with the respect which dependents know how to pay. He soon began to feel part of the misery of greatness; he that could say that he knew him, considered himself as having fortune in his power. Commissions, solicitations, remonstrances, crowded about him; he was expected to do every man's business, to procure employment for one, and to retain it for another. In assisting those who addressed him, he represents himself as sufficiently diligent; and desires to have others believe, what he probably believed himself, that by his interposition many Whigs of merit, and among them Addison and Congreve, were continued in their places. But every man of known influence has so many petitions which he cannot grant, that he must necessarily offend more than he gratifies, because the preference given to one affords all the rest reason for complaint. "When I give away a place," said Lewis XIV. "I make an hundred discontented, and one ungrateful."

Much

Much has been said of the equality and independence which he preserved in his conversation with the Ministers, of the frankness of his remonstrances, and the familiarity of his friendship. In accounts of this kind a few single incidents are set against the general tenour of behaviour. No man, however, can pay a more servile tribute to the Great, than by suffering his liberty in their presence to aggrandize him in his own esteem. Between different ranks of the community there is necessarily some distance: he who is called by his superior to pass the interval, may properly accept the invitation; but petulance and obtrusion are rarely produced by magnanimity; nor have often any nobler cause than the pride of importance, and the malice of inferiority. He who knows himself necessary may set, while that necessity lasts, a high value upon himself; as, in a lower condition, a servant eminently skilful may be saucy; but he is saucy only because he is servile. Swift appears to have preserved the kindness of the great when they wanted him no longer; and therefore it must be allowed, that the childish freedom, to which
he

he seems enough inclined, was overpowered by his better qualities.

His disinterestedness has been likewise mentioned; a strain of heroism, which would have been in his condition romantick and superfluous. Ecclesiastical benefices, when they become vacant, must be given away; and the friends of Power may, if there be no inherent disqualification, reasonably expect them. Swift accepted (1713) the deanery of St. Patrick, the best preferment that his friends could venture to give him. That Ministry was in a great degree supported by the Clergy, who were not yet reconciled to the author of the "Tale of a Tub," and would not without much discontent and indignation have born to see him installed in an English Cathedral.

He refused, indeed, fifty pounds from Lord Oxford; but he accepted afterwards a draught of a thousand upon the Exchequer, which was intercepted by the Queen's death, and which he resigned, as he says himself, "multa gemens, "with many a groan."

In the midst of his power and his politicks, he kept a journal of his visits, his walks, his interviews with Ministers, and quarrels with

his servant, and transmitted it to Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Dingley, to whom he knew that whatever befel him was interesting, and no accounts could be too minute. Whether these diurnal trifles were properly exposed to eyes which had never received any pleasure from the presence of the Dean, may be reasonably doubted: they have, however, some odd attraction; the reader, finding frequent mention of names which he has been used to consider as important, goes on in hope of information; and, as there is nothing to fatigue attention, if he is disappointed he can hardly complain. It is easy to perceive, from every page, that though ambition pressed Swift into a life of bustle, the wish for a life of ease was always returning.

He went to take possession of his deanery, as soon as he had obtained it; but he was not suffered to stay in Ireland more than a fortnight before he was recalled to England, that he might reconcile Lord Oxford and Lord Bolingbroke, who began to look on one another with malevolence, which every day increased, and which Bolingbroke appeared to retain in his last years.

Swift

Swift contrived an interview, from which they both departed discontented: he procured a second, which only convinced him that the feud was irreconcilable: he told them his opinion, that all was lost. This denunciation was contradicted by Oxford; but Bolingbroke whispered that he was right.

Before this violent dissension had shattered the Ministry, Swift had published, in the beginning of the year (1714), "The publick Spirit of the Whigs," in answer to "The Crisis," a pamphlet for which Steele was expelled from the House of Commons. Swift was now so far alienated from Steele, as to think him no longer entitled to decency, and therefore treats him sometimes with contempt, and sometimes with abhorrence.

In this pamphlet the Scotch were mentioned in terms so provoking to that irritable nation, that, resolving "not to be offended with impunity," the Scotch Lords in a body demanded an audience of the Queen, and solicited reparation. A proclamation was issued, in which three hundred pounds was offered for discovery of the author. From this storm he was, as he relates, "secured by a sleight," of

what kind, or by whose prudence, is not known; and such was the increase of his reputation, that the Scottish "Nation applied " again that he would be their friend."

He was become so formidable to the Whigs, that his familiarity with the Ministers was clamoured at in Parliament, particularly by two men, afterwards of great note, Aislabie and Walpole.

But by the disunion of his great friends, his importance and designs were now at an end; and seeing his services at last useless, he retired about June (1714) into Berkshire, where, in the house of a friend, he wrote what was then suppressed, but has since appeared under the title of "Free thoughts on the present State of " Affairs."

While he was waiting in this retirement for events which time or chance might bring to pass, the death of the Queen broke down at once the whole system of Tory Politicks; and nothing remained but to withdraw from the implacability of triumphant Whiggism, and shelter himself in unenvied obscurity.

The accounts of his reception in Ireland, given by Lord Orrery, and Dr. Delany, are so different,

different, that the credit of the writers, both undoubtedly veracious, cannot be saved, but by supposing, what I think is true, that they speak of different times. When Delany says that he was received with respect, he means for the first fortnight, when he came to take legal possession; and when Lord Orrery tells that he was pelted by the populace, he is to be understood of the time when, after the Queen's death, he became a settled resident.

The Archbishop of Dublin gave him at first some disturbance in the exercise of his jurisdiction; but it was soon discovered, that between prudence and integrity he was seldom in the wrong; and that, when he was right, his spirit did not easily yield to opposition.

Having so lately quitted the tumults of a party, and the intrigues of a court, they still kept his thoughts in agitation, as the sea fluctuates a while when the storm has ceased. He therefore filled his hours with some historical attempts, relating to the "Change of the Ministers," and "the Conduct of the Ministry." He likewise is said to have written a "History of the Four last Years of Queen Anne," which he began in her lifetime, and afterwards

laboured with great attention, but never published. It was after his death in the hands of Lord Orrery and Dr. King. A book under that title was published, with Swift's name, by Dr. Lucas; of which I can only say, that it seemed by no means to correspond with the notions that I had formed of it, from a conversation which I once heard between the Earl of Orrery and old Mr. Lewis.

Swift now, much against his will, commenced Irishman for life, and was to contrive how he might be best accommodated in a country where he considered himself as in a state of exile. It seems that his first recourse was to piety. The thoughts of death rushed upon him, at this time, with such incessant importunity, that they took possession of his mind, when he first waked, for many years together.

He opened his house by a publick table two days a week, and found his entertainments gradually frequented by more and more visitants of learning among the men, and of elegance among the women. Mrs. Johnson had left the country, and lived in lodgings not far from the deanery. On his publick days the regulated

regulated the table, but appeared at it as a mere guest, like other Ladies.

On other days he often dined, at a stated price, with Mr. Worral, a clergyman of his cathedral, whose house was recommended by the peculiar neatness and pleasantry of his wife. To this frugal mode of living, he was first disposed by care to pay some debts which he had contracted, and he continued it for the pleasure of accumulating money. His avarice, however, was not suffered to obstruct the claims of his dignity; he was served in plate, and used to say that he was the poorest gentleman in Ireland that eat upon plate, and the richest that lived without a coach.

How he spent the rest of his time, and how he employed his hours of study, has been enquired with hopeless curiosity. For who can give an account of another's studies? Swift was not likely to admit any to his privacies, or to impart a minute account of his business or his leisure.

Soon after (1716), in his forty-ninth year, he was privately married to Mrs. Johnson by Dr. Ashe, Bishop of Clogher, as Dr. Madden told me, in the garden. The marriage

riage made no change in their mode of life; they lived in different houses, as before; nor did she ever lodge in the deanery but when Swift was seized with a fit of giddiness. "It would be difficult," says Lord Orrery, "to prove that they were ever afterwards together without a third person."

The Dean of St. Patrick's lived in a private manner, known and regarded only by his friends, till, about the year 1720, he, by a pamphlet, recommended to the Irish the use, and consequently the improvement, of their manufacture. For a man to use the productions of his own labour is surely a natural right, and to like best what he makes himself is a natural passion. But to excite this passion, and enforce this right, appeared so criminal to those who had an interest in the English trade, that the printer was imprisoned; and, as Hawkesworth justly observes, the attention of the publick being by this outrageous resentment turned upon the proposal, the author was by consequence made popular.

In 1723 died Mrs. Van Homrigh, a woman made unhappy by her admiration of wit, and ignominiously distinguished by the name of
Vanessa,

Vaneſſa, whoſe conduct has been already ſufficiently diſcuſſed, and whoſe hiſtory is too well known to be minutely repeated. She was a young woman fond of literature, whom Decanus the Dean, called Cadenus by tranſpoſition of the letters, took pleaſure in directing and inſtructing; till, from being proud of his praiſe, he grew fond of his perſon. Swift was then about forty-ſeven, at an age when vanity is ſtrongly excited by the amorous attention of a young woman. If it be ſaid that Swift ſhould have checked a paſſion which he never meant to gratify, recourſe muſt be had to that extenuation which he ſo much deſpiſed, “men are but men:” perhaps however he did not at firſt know his own mind, and, as he repreſents himſelf, was undetermined. For his admiſſion of her courtſhip, and his indulgence of her hopes after his marriage to Stella, no other honeſt plea can be found, than that he delayed a diſagreeable diſcovery from time to time, dreading the immediate burſts of diſtreſs, and watching for a favourable moment. She thought herſelf neglected, and died of diſappointment; having ordered by her will the poem to be publiſhed, in which Cadenus had proclaimed

proclaimed her excellence, and confessed his love. The effect of the publication upon the Dean and Stella is thus related by Delany :

“ I have good reason to believe, that they
 “ both were greatly shocked and distressed
 “ (though it may be differently) upon this oc-
 “ casion. The Dean made a tour to the South
 “ of Ireland, for about two months, at this
 “ time, to dissipate his thoughts, and give
 “ place to obloquy. And Stella retired (upon
 “ the earnest invitation of the owner) to the
 “ house of a cheerful, generous, good-natured
 “ friend of the Dean’s, whom she also much
 “ loved and honoured. There my informer
 “ often saw her ; and, I have reason to be-
 “ lieve, used his utmost endeavours to re-
 “ lieve, support, and amuse her, in this sad
 “ situation.

“ One little incident he told me of, on that
 “ occasion, I think I shall never forget. As
 “ her friend was an hospitable, open-hearted
 “ man, well-beloved, and largely acquainted,
 “ it happened one day that some gentlemen
 “ dropt in to dinner, who were strangers to
 “ Stella’s situation ; and as the poem of Cade-
 “ nus and Vanessa was then the general topic
 “ of

“ of conversation, one of them said, ‘ Surely
“ that Vanessa must be an extraordinary wo-
“ man, that could inspire the Dean to write so
“ finely upon her.’ Mrs. Johnson smiled,
“ and answered, ‘ that she thought that point
“ not quite so clear; for it was well known
“ the Dean could write finely upon a broom-
“ stick.”

The great acquisition of esteem and influence was made by the “ Drapier’s Letters” in 1724. One Wood of Wolverhampton in Staffordshire, a man enterprising and rapacious, had, as is said, by a present to the Duchess of Munster, obtained a patent, empowering him to coin one hundred and eighty thousand pounds of halfpence and farthings for the kingdom of Ireland, in which there was a very inconvenient and embarrassing scarcity of copper coin; so that it was impossible to run in debt upon the credit of a piece of money; for the cook or keeper of an alehouse could not refuse to supply a man that had silver in his hand, and the buyer would not leave his money without change.

The project was therefore plausible. The scarcity, which was already great, Wood took
care

care to make greater, by agents who gathered up the old half-pence; and was about to turn his brass into gold, by pouring the treasures of his new mint upon Ireland, when Swift, finding that the metal was debased to an enormous degree, wrote Letters, under the name of M. B. Drapier, to shew the folly of receiving, and the mischief that must ensue, by giving gold and silver for coin worth perhaps not a third part of its nominal value.

The nation was alarmed; the new coin was universally refused; but the governors of Ireland considered resistance to the King's patent as highly criminal; and one Whithed, then Chief Justice, who had tried the printer of the former pamphlet, and sent out the Jury nine times, till by clamour and menaces they were frightened into a special verdict, now presented the Drapier, but could not prevail on the Grand Jury to find the bill.

Lord Carteret and the Privy Council published a proclamation, offering three hundred pounds for discovering the author of the Fourth Letter. Swift had concealed himself from his printers, and trusted only his butler, who transcribed the paper. The man, immediately

diately after the appearance of the proclamation, strolled from the house, and staid out all night, and part of the next day. There was reason enough to fear that he had betrayed his master for the reward; but he came home, and the Dean ordered him to put off his livery, and leave the house; "for," says he, "I know that my life is in your power, and I will not bear, out of fear, either your insolence or negligence." The man excused his fault with great submission, and begged that he might be confined in the house while it was in his power to endanger his master; but the Dean resolutely turned him out, without taking farther notice of him, till the term of information had expired, and then received him again. Soon afterwards he ordered him and the rest of the servants into his presence, without telling his intentions, and bade them take notice that their fellow-servant was no longer Robert the butler; but that his integrity had made him Mr. Blakeney, verger of St. Patrick's; an officer whose income was between thirty and forty pounds a year: yet he still continued

tinued for some years to serve his old master as his butler *.

Swift was known from this time by the appellation of The Dean. He was honoured by the populace, as the champion, patron, and instructor of Ireland; and gained such power as, considered both in its extent and duration, scarcely any man has ever enjoyed without greater wealth or higher station.

He was from this important year the oracle of the traders, and the idol of the rabble, and by consequence was feared and courted by all to whom the kindness of the traders or the populace was necessary. The Drapier was a sign; the Drapier was a health; and which way soever the eye or the ear was turned, some tokens were found of the nation's gratitude to the Drapier.

The benefit was indeed great; he had rescued Ireland from a very oppressive and predatory invasion; and the popularity which he had gained he was diligent to keep, by appearing forward and zealous on every occasion

* An Account somewhat different from this is given by Mr. Sheridan in his *Life of Swift*, p. 211. E.

where the public interest was supposed to be involved. Nor did he much scruple to boast his influence; for when, upon some attempts to regulate the coin, Archbishop Boulter, then one of the Justices, accused him of exasperating the people, he exculpated himself by saying, "If I had lifted up my finger, they would have torn you to pieces."

But the pleasure of popularity was soon interrupted by domestic misery. Mrs. Johnson, whose conversation was to him the great softener of the ills of life, began in the year of the Drapier's triumph to decline; and two years afterwards was so wasted with sickness, that her recovery was considered as hopeless.

Swift was then in England, and had been invited by Lord Bolingbroke to pass the winter with him in France; but this call of calamity hastened him to Ireland, where perhaps his presence contributed to restore her to imperfect and tottering health.

He was now so much at ease, that (1727) he returned to England; where he collected three volumes of Miscellanies in conjunction with Pope, who prefixed a querulous and apologetical preface.

This

This important year sent likewise into the world "Gulliver's Travels," a production so new and strange, that it filled the reader with a mingled emotion of merriment and amazement. It was received with such avidity, that the price of the first edition was raised before the second could be made; it was read by the high and the low, the learned and illiterate. Criticism was for a while lost in wonder; no rules of judgement were applied to a book written in open defiance of truth and regularity. But when distinctions came to be made, the part which gave least pleasure was that which describes the Flying Island, and that which gave most disgust must be the history of the Houyhnhnms.

While Swift was enjoying the reputation of his new work, the news of the king's death arrived; and he kissed the hands of the new King and Queen three days after their accession.

By the Queen, when she was Princess, he had been treated with some distinction, and was well received by her in her exaltation; but whether she gave hopes which she never took care to satisfy, or he formed expectations which she

she never meant to raise, the event was, that he always afterwards thought on her with malevolence, and particularly charged her with breaking her promise of some medals which she engaged to send him.

I know not whether she had not, in her turn, some reason for complaint. A Letter was sent her, not so much entreating as requiring her patronage of Mrs. Barber, an ingenious Irishwoman, who was then begging subscriptions for her Poems. To this Letter was subscribed the name of Swift, and it has all the appearances of his diction and sentiments; but it was not written in his hand, and had some little improprieties. When he was charged with this Letter, he laid hold of the inaccuracies, and urged the improbability of the accusation; but never denied it: he shuffles between cowardice and veracity, and talks big when he says nothing*.

He seemed desirous enough of recommencing courtier, and endeavoured to gain the kindness

* It is but justice to the Dean's memory, to refer to Mr. Sheridan's defence of him from this charge. See the Life of Swift, p. 458. E.

of Mrs. Howard, remembering what Mrs. Masham had performed in former times; but his flatteries were, like those of other wits, unsuccessful; the Lady either wanted power, or had no ambition of poetical immortality.

He was seized not long afterwards by a fit of giddiness, and again heard of the sickness and danger of Mrs. Johnson. He then left the house of Pope, as it seems, with very little ceremony, finding "that two sick friends cannot "live together;" and did not write to him till he found himself at Chester.

He returned to a home of sorrow: poor Stella was sinking into the grave, and, after a languishing decay of about two months, died in her forty-fourth year, on January 28, 1728. How much he wished her life, his papers shew; nor can it be doubted that he dreaded the death of her whom he loved most, aggravated by the consciousness that himself had hastened it.

Beauty and the power of pleasing, the greatest external advantages that woman can desire or possess, were fatal to the unfortunate Stella. The man whom she had the misfortune to love was, as Delany observes, fond of singularity,

larity, and desirous to make a mode of happiness for himself, different from the general course of things and order of Providence. From the time of her arrival in Ireland he seems resolved to keep her in his power, and therefore hindered a match sufficiently advantageous, by accumulating unreasonable demands, and prescribing conditions that could not be performed. While she was at her own disposal he did not consider his possession as secure; resentment, ambition, or caprice, might separate them; he was therefore resolved to make "assurance double sure," and to appropriate her by a private marriage, to which he had annexed the expectation of all the pleasures of perfect friendship, without the uneasiness of conjugal restraint. But with this state poor Stella was not satisfied; she never was treated as a wife, and to the world she had the appearance of a mistress. She lived fullenly on, in hope that in time he would own and receive her; but the time did not come till the change of his manners and depravation of his mind made her tell him, when he offered to acknowledge her, that "it was too late." She then gave up herself to sorrowful resentment, and died under the

tyranny of him, by whom she was in the highest degree loved and honoured.

What were her claims to this excentric tenderness, by which the laws of nature were violated to retain her, curiosity will enquire; but how shall it be gratified? Swift was a lover; his testimony may be suspected. Delany and the Irish saw with Swift's eyes, and therefore add little confirmation. That she was virtuous, beautiful, and elegant, in a very high degree, such admiration from such a lover makes it very probable; but she had not much literature, for she could not spell her own language; and of her wit, so loudly vaunted, the smart sayings which Swift himself has collected afford no splendid specimen.

The reader of Swift's "Letter to a Lady on her marriage," may be allowed to doubt whether his opinion of female excellence ought implicitly to be admitted, for if his general thoughts on women were such as he exhibits, a very little sense in a Lady would enrapture, and a very little virtue would astonish him. Stella's supremacy, therefore, was perhaps only local; she was great, because her associates were little.

In

In some Remarks lately published on the Life of Swift, his marriage is mentioned as fabulous, or doubtful; but, alas! poor Stella, as Dr. Madden told me, related her melancholy story to Dr. Sheridan, when he attended her as a clergyman to prepare her for death; and Delany mentions it not with doubt, but only with regret. Swift never mentioned her without a sigh.

The rest of his life was spent in Ireland, in a country to which not even power almost despotick, nor flattery almost idolatrous, could reconcile him. He sometimes wished to visit England, but always found some reason to delay. He tells Pope, in the decline of life, that he hopes once more to see him; "but if not," says he, "we must part, as all human beings have parted."

After the death of Stella, his benevolence was contracted, and his severity exasperated; he drove his acquaintance from his table, and wondered why he was deserted. But he continued his attention to the publick, and wrote from time to time such directions, admonitions, or censures, as the exigency of affairs, in his

opinion, made proper; and nothing fell from his pen in vain.

In a short poem on the Presbyterians, whom he always regarded with detestation, he bestowed one stricture upon Bettsworth, a lawyer eminent for his insolence to the clergy, which, from very considerable reputation, brought him into immediate and universal contempt. Bettsworth, enraged at his disgrace and loss, went to Swift, and demanded whether he was the author of that poem? "Mr. Bettsworth," answered he, "I was in my youth acquainted with great lawyers, who, knowing my disposition to satire, advised me, that if any scoundrel or blockhead whom I had lampooned should ask, 'Are you the author of this paper?' I should tell him that I was not the author; and therefore I tell you, Mr. Bettsworth, that I am not the author of these lines."

Bettsworth was so little satisfied with this account, that he publicly professed his resolution of a violent and corporal revenge; but the Inhabitants of St. Patrick's district embodied themselves in the Dean's defence. Bettsworth
declared

declared in Parliament, that Swift had deprived him of twelve hundred pounds a year.

Swift was popular awhile by another mode of beneficence. He set aside some hundreds to be lent in small sums to the poor, from five shillings, I think, to five pounds. He took no interest, and only required that, at repayment, a small fee should be given to the accomptant: but he required that the day of promised payment should be exactly kept. A severe and punctilious temper is ill qualified for transactions with the poor; the day was often broken, and the loan was not repaid. This might have been easily foreseen; but for this Swift had made no provision of patience or pity. He ordered his debtors to be sued. A severe creditor has no popular character; what then was likely to be said of him who employs the catchpoll under the appearance of charity? The clamour against him was loud, and the resentment of the populous outrageous; he was therefore forced to drop his scheme, and own the folly of expecting punctuality from the poor*.

His

* This account is contradicted by Mr. Sheridan, who with great warmth asserts, from his own knowledge, that there was

His asperity continually increasing, condemned him to solitude ; and his resentment of solitude sharpened his asperity. He was not, however, totally deserted ; some men of learning, and some women of elegance, often visited him ; and he wrote from time to time either verse or prose ; of his verses he willingly gave copies, and is supposed to have felt no discontent when he saw them printed. His favourite maxim was, “ Vive la bagatelle ;” he thought trifles a necessary part of life, and perhaps found them necessary to himself. It seems impossible to him to be idle, and his disorders made it difficult or dangerous to be long seriously studious, or laboriously diligent. The love of ease is always gaining upon age, and he had one temptation to petty amusements peculiar to himself ; whatever he did, he was sure to hear applauded ; and such was his predominance over all that approached, that all their applauses were probably sincere. He that is much flattered, soon learns to flatter himself : we are commonly taught our duty by fear or

not one syllable of truth in this whole account from the beginning to the end. *See Life of Swift*, p. 457. E.

flame,

shame, and how can they act upon the man who hears nothing but his own praises?

As his years increased, his fits of giddiness and deafness grew more frequent, and his deafness made conversation difficult: they grew likewise more severe, till in 1736, as he was writing a poem called "The Legion Club," he was seized with a fit so painful, and so long continued, that he never after thought it proper to attempt any work of thought or labour.

He was always careful of his money, and was therefore no liberal entertainer; but was less frugal of his wine than of his meat. When his friends of either sex came to him, in expectation of a dinner, his custom was to give every one a shilling, that they might please themselves with their provision. At last his avarice grew too powerful for his kindness; he would refuse a bottle of wine, and in Ireland no man visits where he cannot drink.

Having thus excluded conversation, and desisted from study, he had neither business nor amusement; for having, by some ridiculous resolution or mad vow, determined never to wear spectacles, he could make little use of
books

books in his later years: his ideas therefore, being neither renovated by discourse, nor increased by reading, wore gradually away, and left his mind vacant to the vexations of the hour, till at last his anger was heightened into madness.

He however permitted one book to be published, which had been the production of former years; "Polite Conversation," which appeared in 1738. The "Directions for Servants" was printed soon after his death. These two performances shew a mind incessantly attentive, and, when it was not employed upon great things, busy with minute occurrences. It is apparent that he must have had the habit of noting whatever he observed; for such a number of particulars could never have been assembled by the power of recollection.

He grew more violent; and his mental powers declined till (1741) it was found necessary that legal guardians should be appointed of his person and fortune. He now lost distinction. His madness was compounded of rage and fatuity. The last face that he knew was that of Mrs. Whiteway; and her he ceased to know

know in a little time. His meat was brought him cut into mouthfuls; but he would never touch it while the servant staid, and at last, after it had stood perhaps an hour, would eat it walking; for he continued his old habit, and was on his feet ten hours a-day.

Next year (1742) he had an inflammation in his left eye, which swelled it to the size of an egg, with boils in other parts; he was kept long waking with the pain, and was not easily restrained by five attendants from tearing out his eye.

The tumour at last subsided; and a short interval of reason ensuing, in which he knew his physician and his family, gave hopes of his recovery; but in a few days he sunk into lethargick stupidity, motionless, heedless, and speechless. But it is said, that, after a year of total silence, when his housekeeper, on the 30th of November, told him that the usual bonfires and illuminations were preparing to celebrate his birthday, he answered, "It is all folly; they had better let it alone."

It is remembered that he afterwards spoke now and then, or gave some intimation of a meaning; but at last sunk into a perfect silence, which

which continued till about the end of October 1744, when, in his seventy-eighth year, he expired without a struggle.

WHEN Swift is considered as an author, it is just to estimate his powers by their effects. In the reign of Queen Anne he turned the stream of popularity against the Whigs, and must be confessed to have dictated for a time the political opinions of the English nation. In the succeeding reign he delivered Ireland from plunder and oppression; and shewed that wit, confederated with truth, had such force as authority was unable to resist. He said truly of himself, that Ireland "was his debtor." It was from the time when he first began to patronize the Irish, that they may date their riches and prosperity. He taught them first to know their own interest, their weight, and their strength, and gave them spirit to assert that equality with their fellow-subjects to which they have ever since been making vigorous advances, and to claim those rights which they have at last established. Nor can they be charged with ingratitude to their benefactor;
for

for they revered him as a guardian, and obeyed him as a dictator.

In his works, he has given very different specimens both of sentiments and expression. His "Tale of a Tub" has little resemblance to his other pieces. It exhibits a vehemence and rapidity of mind, a copiousness of images, and vivacity of diction, such as he afterwards never possessed or never exerted. It is of a mode so distinct and peculiar, that it must be considered by itself; what is true of that, is not true of any thing else which he has written.

In his other works is found an equable tenour of easy language, which rather trickles than flows. His delight was in simplicity. That he has in his works no metaphor, as has been said, is not true; but his few metaphors seem to be received rather by necessity than choice. He studied purity; and though perhaps all his strictures are not exact, yet it is not often that solecisms can be found; and whoever depends on his authority may generally conclude himself safe. His sentences are never too much dilated or contracted; and it will not be easy to find any embarrassment in the complication

plication of his clauses, any in consequence in his connections, or abruptness in his transitions.

His style was well suited to his thoughts, which are never subtilised by nice disquisitions, decorated by sparkling conceits, elevated by ambitious sentences, or variegated by far-sought learning. He pays no court to the passions; he excites neither surprise nor admiration; he always understands himself: and his readers always understand him: the peruser of Swift wants little previous knowledge; it will be sufficient that he is acquainted with common words and common things; he is neither required to mount elevations, nor to explore profundities; his passage is always on a level, along solid ground, without asperities, without obstruction.

This easy and safe conveyance of meaning it was Swift's desire to attain, and for having attained he deserves praise, though perhaps not the highest praise. For purposes merely didactic, when something is to be told that was not known before, it is the best mode, but against that inattention by which known truths are suffered to lie neglected, it makes no provision; it instructs, but does not persuade.

By

By his political education he was associated with the Whigs ; but he deserted them when they deserted their principles, yet without running into the contrary extreme ; he continued throughout his life to retain the disposition which he assigns to the " Church-of-England " Man," of thinking commonly with the Whigs of the State, and with the Tories of the Church.

He was a churchman rationally zealous ; he desired the prosperity, and maintained the honour of the Clergy ; of the Dissenters he did not wish to infringe the toleration, but he opposed their encroachments.

To his duty as Dean he was very attentive. He managed the revenues of his church with exact œconomy ; and it is said by Delany, that more money was, under his direction, laid out in repairs than had ever been in the same time since its first erection. Of his choir he was eminently careful ; and, though he neither loved nor understood musick, took care that all the singers were well qualified, admitting none without the testimony of skilful judges.

In

In his church he restored the practice of weekly communion, and distributed the sacramental elements in the most solemn and devout manner with his own hand. He came to church every morning, preached commonly in his turn, and attended the evening anthem, that it might not be negligently performed.

He read the service "rather with a strong nervous voice than in a graceful manner, his voice was sharp and high-toned, rather than harmonious."

He entered upon the clerical state with hope to excel in preaching; but complained, that, from the time of his political controversies, "he could only preach pamphlets." This censure of himself, if judgement be made from those sermons which have been printed, was unreasonably severe.

The suspicions of his irreligion proceeded in a great measure from his dread of hypocrisy; instead of wishing to seem better, he delighted in seeming worse than he was. He went in London to early prayers, lest he should be seen at church; he read prayers to his servants every morning with such dexterous secrecy, that Dr. Delany was six months in his house before

before he knew it. He was not only careful to hide the good which he did, but willingly incurred the suspicion of evil which he did not. He forgot what himself had formerly asserted, that hypocrisy is less mischievous than open impiety. Dr Delany, with all his zeal for his honour, has justly condemned this part of his character.

The person of Swift had not many recommendations. He had a kind of muddy complexion, which, though he washed himself with oriental scrupulosity, did not look clear. He had a countenance sour and severe, which he seldom softened by any appearance of gaiety. He stubbornly resisted any tendency to laughter.

To his domesticks he was naturally rough ; and a man of a rigorous temper, with that vigilance of minute attention which his works discover, must have been a master that few could bear. That he was disposed to do his servants good, on important occasions, is no great mitigation ; benefaction can be but rare, and tyrannick peevishness is perpetual. He did not spare the servants of others. Once, when he dined alone with the Earl of Orrery, he said, of one that waited in the room, " That man

“ has, since we sat to the table, committed
“ fifteen faults.” What the faults were, Lord
Orrery, from whom I heard the story, had not
been attentive enough to discover. My number
may perhaps not be exact.

In his œconomy he practised a peculiar and
offensive parsimony, without disguise or apo-
logy. The practice of saving being once ne-
cessary, became habitual, and grew first ridicu-
lous, and at last detestable. But his avarice,
though it might exclude pleasure, was never
suffered to encroach upon his virtue. He was
frugal by inclination, but liberal by principle;
and if the purpose to which he destined his
little accumulations be remembered, with his
distribution of occasional charity, it will per-
haps appear that he only liked one mode of ex-
pence better than another, and saved merely
that he might have something to give. He
did not grow rich by injuring his suecessors,
but left both Laracor and the Deanery more
valuable than he found them.—With all this
talk of his covetousness and generosity, it
should be remembered that he was never rich.
The revenue of his Deanery was not much
more than seven hundred a year.

His

His beneficence was not graced with tenderness or civility; he relieved without pity, and assisted without kindness; so that those who were fed by him could hardly love him.

He made a rule to himself to give but one piece at a time, and therefore always stored his pocket with coins of different value.

Whatever he did, he seemed willing to do in a manner peculiar to himself, without sufficiently considering that singularity, as it implies a contempt of the general practice, is a kind of defiance which justly provokes the hostility of ridicule; he therefore who indulges peculiar habits is worse than others, if he be not better.

Of his humour, a story told by Pope * may afford a specimen.

“ Dr. Swift has an odd, blunt way, that
 “ is mistaken, by strangers, for ill-nature.—
 “ ’Tis so odd, that there’s no describing it
 “ but by facts. I’ll tell you one that first
 “ comes into my head. One evening, Gay and
 “ I went to see him: you know how intimately we were all acquainted. On our com-

* Spence.

ing in, 'Heyday, gentlemen, (says the Doctor) what's the meaning of this visit? How came you to leave the great Lords, that you are so fond of, to come hither to see a poor Dean!'—'Because we would rather see you than any of them.'—'Ay, any one that did not know so well as I do, might believe you. But since you are come, I must get some supper for you, I suppose.' 'No, Doctor, we have supped already.'—'Supped already? that's impossible! why, 'tis not eight o'clock yet.—That's very strange; but, if you had not supped, I must have got something for you.—Let me see, what should I have had? A couple of lobsters; ay, that would have done very well; two shillings—tarts, a shilling: but you will drink a glass of wine with me, though you supped so much before your usual time only to spare my pocket?'—'No, we had rather talk with you than drink with you.'—'But if you had supped with me, as in all reason you ought to have done, you must then have drunk with me.—A bottle of wine, two shillings—two and two is four, and one is five: just two-and-six-pence a-piece. There, Pope, there's half a crown

“ for

“ for you, and there’s another for you, Sir ;
“ for I won’t save any thing by you, I am de-
“ termined.”—This was all said and done with
“ his usual seriousness on such occasions ; and,
“ in spite of every thing we could say to the
“ contrary, he actually obliged us to take the
“ money.”

In the intercourse of familiar life, he indulged his disposition to petulance and sarcasm, and thought himself injured if the licentiousness of his raillery, the freedom of his censures, or the petulance of his frolics, was resented or repressed. He predominated over his companions with very high ascendancy, and probably would bear none over whom he could not predominate. To give him advice was, in the style of his friend Delany, “ to venture to speak “ to him.” This customary superiority soon grew too delicate for truth ; and Swift, with all his penetration, allowed himself to be delighted with low flattery.

On all common occasions, he habitually affects a style of arrogance, and dictates rather than persuades. This authoritative and magisterial language he expected to be received as his peculiar mode of jocularità : but he ap-

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parently flattered his own arrogance by an assumed imperiousness, in which he was ironical only to the resentful, and to the submissive sufficiently serious.

He told stories with great felicity, and delighted in doing what he knew himself to do well; he was therefore captivated by the respectful silence of a steady listener, and told the same tales too often.

He did not, however, claim the right of talking alone; for it was his rule, when he had spoken a minute, to give room by a pause for any other speaker. Of time, on all occasions, he was an exact computer, and knew the minutes required to every common operation.

It may be justly supposed that there was in his conversation, what appears so frequently in his Letters, an affectation of familiarity with the Great, an ambition of momentary equality sought and enjoyed by the neglect of those ceremonies which custom has established as the barriers between one order of society and another. This transgression of regularity was by himself and his admirers termed greatness of soul. But a great mind disdains to hold any thing by courtesy, and therefore never usurps what a
lawful

lawful claimant may take away. He that encroaches on another's dignity, puts himself in his power; he is either repelled with helpless indignity, or endured by clemency and condescension.

Of Swift's general habits of thinking, if his Letters can be supposed to afford any evidence, he was not a man to be either loved or envied. He seems to have wasted life in discontent, by the rage of neglected pride, and the languishment of unsatisfied desire. He is querulous and fastidious, arrogant and malignant; he scarcely speaks of himself but with indignant lamentations, or of others but with insolent superiority when he is gay, and with angry contempt when he is gloomy. From the Letters that pass between him and Pope it might be inferred that they, with Arbuthnot and Gay, had engrossed all the understanding and virtue of mankind; that their merits filled the world; or that there was no hope of more. They shew the age involved in darkness, and shade the picture with sullen emulation.

When the Queen's death drove him into Ireland, he might be allowed to regret for a time the

interception of his views, the extinction of his hopes, and his ejection from gay scenes, important employment, and splendid friendships; but when time had enabled reason to prevail over vexation, the complaints, which at first were natural, became ridiculous because they were useless. But querulousness was now grown habitual, and he cried out when he probably had ceased to feel. His reiterated wailings persuaded Bolingbroke that he was really willing to quit his deanery for an English parish; and Bolingbroke procured an exchange, which was rejected; and Swift still retained the pleasure of complaining.

The greatest difficulty that occurs, in analysing his character, is to discover by what depravity of intellect he took delight in revolving ideas, from which almost every other mind shrinks with disgust. The ideas of pleasure, even when criminal, may solicit the imagination; but what has disease, deformity, and filth, upon which the thoughts can be allured to dwell? Delany is willing to think that Swift's mind was not much tainted with this gross corruption before his long visit to Pope. He does not consider how he degrades his hero,
by

by making him at fifty-nine the pupil of turpitude, and liable to the malignant influence of an ascendant mind. But the truth is, that Gulliver had described his Yahoos before the visit; and he that had formed those images had nothing filthy to learn.

I have here given the character of Swift as he exhibits himself to my perception; but now let another be heard who knew him better. Dr. Delany, after long acquaintance, describes him to Lord Orrery in these terms.

“ My Lord, when you consider Swift’s singular, peculiar, and most variegated vein of wit, always rightly intended (although not always so rightly directed), delightful in many instances, and salutary even where it is most offensive; when you consider his strict truth, his fortitude in resisting oppression and arbitrary power; his fidelity in friendship, his sincere love and zeal for religion, his uprightness in making right resolutions, and his steadiness in adhering to them; his care of his church, its choir, its œconomy, and its income; his attention to all those that preached in his cathedral, in order to their amendment in pronunciation
“ and

“ and style ; as also his remarkable attention
 “ to the interest of his successors, preferably to
 “ his own present emoluments ; his invincible
 “ patriotism, even to a country which he did not
 “ love ; his very various, well-devised, well-
 “ judged, and extensive charities, throughout
 “ his life, and his whole fortune (to say nothing
 “ of his wife’s) conveyed to the same Chris-
 “ tian purposes at his death ; charities, from
 “ which he could enjoy no honour, advantage,
 “ or satisfaction of any kind in this world ;
 “ when you consider his ironical and hu-
 “ morous, as well as his serious schemes, for
 “ the promotion of true religion and virtue ;
 “ his success in soliciting for the First Fruits
 “ and Twentieths, to the unspeakable benefit
 “ of the established Church of Ireland ; and
 “ his felicity (to rate it no higher) in giving
 “ occasion to the building of fifty new churches
 “ in London :

“ All this considered, the character of his
 “ life will appear like that of his writings ; they
 “ will both bear to be re-considered and re-
 “ examined with the utmost attention, and
 “ always discover new beauties and excellencies
 “ upon every examination.

“ They

“ They will bear to be considered as the sun,
“ in which the brightness will hide the ble-
“ mishes ; and whenever petulant ignorance,
“ pride, malice, malignity, or envy, interposes
“ to cloud or fally his fame, I will take upon
“ me to pronounce that the eclipse will not last
“ long.

“ To conclude—no man ever deserved bet-
“ ter of his country than Swift did of his. A
“ steady, persevering, inflexible friend ; a wise,
“ a watchful, and a faithful counsellor, under
“ many severe trials and bitter persecutions, to
“ the manifest hazard both of his liberty and
“ fortune.

“ He lived a blessing, he died a benefactor,
“ and his name will ever live an honour to Ire-
“ land.”

IN the poetical works of Dr. Swift there is not much upon which the critick can exercise his powers. They are often humorous, almost always light, and have the qualities which recommend such compositions, easiness and gaiety. They are, for the most part, what their author intended. The diction is correct, the numbers are smooth, and the rhymes exact.

There

There seldom occurs a hard-laboured expression, or a redundant epithet; all his verses exemplify his own definition of a good style, they consist of “proper words in proper places.”

To divide this collection into classes, and shew how some pieces are gross, and some are trifling, would be to tell the reader what he knows already, and to find faults of which the author could not be ignorant, who certainly wrote not often to his judgement, but his humour.

It was said, in a Preface to one of the Irish editions, that Swift had never been known to take a single thought from any writer, ancient or modern. This is not literally true; but perhaps no writer can easily be found that has borrowed so little, or that in all his excellencies and all his defects has so well maintained his claim to be considered as original.

B R O O M E.

WILLIAM BROOME was born in Cheshire, as is said of very mean parents. Of the place of his birth, or the first part of his life, I have not been able to gain any intelligence. He was educated upon the foundation at Eton, and was captain of the school a whole year, without any vacancy, by which he might have obtained a scholarship at King's College. Being by this delay, such as is said to have happened very rarely, superannuated, he was sent to St. John's College by the contributions of his friends, where he obtained a small exhibition.

At his College he lived for some time in the same chamber with the well-known Ford, by whom I have formerly heard him described as
a con-

a contracted scholar and a mere versifyer, unacquainted with life, and unskilful in conversation. His addiction to metre was then such, that his companions familiarly called him Poet. When he had opportunities of mingling with mankind, he cleared himself, as Ford likewise owned, from great part of his scholastick rust.

He appeared early in the world as a translator of the "Iliads" into prose, in conjunction with Ozell and Oldisworth. How their several parts were distributed is not known. This is the translation of which Ozell boasted as superior, in Toland's opinion, to that of Pope: it has long since vanished, and is now in no danger from the criticks.

He was introduced to Mr. Pope, who was then visiting Sir John Cotton at Madingley near Cambridge, and gained so much of his esteem, that he was employed, I believe, to make extracts from Eustathius for the notes to the translation of the "Iliad;" and in the volumes of poetry published by Lintot, commonly called "Pope's Miscellanies," many of his early pieces were inserted.

Pope

Pope and Broome were to be yet more closely connected. When the success of the "Iliad" gave encouragement to a version of the "Odyssey," Pope, weary of the toil, called Fenton and Broome to his assistance; and taking only half the work upon himself, divided the other half between his partners, giving four books to Fenton, and eight to Broome. Fenton's books I have enumerated in his Life; to the lot of Broome fell the second, sixth, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, sixteenth, eighteenth, and twenty-third, together with the burthen of writing all the notes.

As this translation is a very important event in poetical history, the reader has a right to know upon what grounds I establish by narration. That the version was not wholly Pope's, was always known; he had mentioned the assistance of two friends in his proposals, and at the end of the work some account is given by Broome of their different parts, which however mentions only five books as written by the coadjutors; the fourth and twentieth by Fenton; the sixth, the eleventh, and eighteenth by himself; though Pope, in an advertisement prefixed afterwards to a new volume of his works,

works, claimed only twelve. A natural curiosity, after the real conduct of so great an undertaking, incited me once to enquire of Dr. Warburton, who told me, in his warm language, that he thought the relation given in the note "a lie;" but that he was not able to ascertain the several shares. The intelligence which Dr. Warburton could not afford me, I obtained from Mr. Langton, to whom Mr. Spence had imparted it.

The price at which Pope purchased this assistance was three hundred pounds paid to Fenton, and five hundred to Broome, with as many copies as he wanted for his friends, which amounted to one hundred more. The payment made to Fenton I know not but by hearsay; Broome's is very distinctly told by Pope, in the notes to the *Dunciad*.

It is evident that, according to Pope's own estimate, Broome was unkindly treated. If four books could merit three hundred pounds, eight and all the notes, equivalent at least to four, had certainly a right to more than six.

Broome probably considered himself as injured, and there was for some time more than
coldness

coldness between him and his employer. He always spoke of Pope as too much a lover of money, and Pope pursued him with avowed hostility; for he not only named him disrespectfully in the "Dunciad," but quoted him more than once in the "Bathos," as a proficient in the "Art of Sinking;" and in his enumeration of the different kinds of poets distinguished for the profound, he reckons Broome among "the Parrots who repeat another's words in such a hoarse odd tone as makes them seem their own." I have been told that they were afterwards reconciled; but I am afraid their peace was without friendship.

He afterwards published a Miscellany of Poems, which is inserted, with corrections, in the late compilation.

He never rose to a very high dignity in the church. He was some time rector of Sturston in Suffolk, where he married a wealthy widow; and afterwards, when the King visited Cambridge (1728), became Doctor of Laws. He was (1733) presented by the Crown to the rectory of Pulham in Norfolk, which he held with Oakley Magna in Suffolk,

given him by the Lord Cornwallis, to whom he was chaplain, and who added the vicarage of Eye in Suffolk; he then resigned Pulham, and retained the other two.

Towards the close of his life he grew again poetical, and amused himself with translating Odes of Anacreon, which he published in the "Gentleman's Magazine," under the name of Chester.

He died at Bath, November 16, 1745, and was buried in the Abbey Church.

Of Broome, though it cannot be said that he was a great poet, it would be unjust to deny that he was an excellent versifier; his lines are smooth and sonorous, and his diction is select and elegant. His rhymes are sometimes unsuitable; in his "Melancholy," he makes breath rhyme to birth in one place, and to earth in another. Those faults occur but seldom; and he had such power of words and numbers as fitted him for translation; but, in his original works, recollection seems to have been his business more than invention. His imitations are so apparent, that it is part of his reader's employment to recall the verses of some former poet. Sometimes he copies the most popular

popular writers, for he seems scarcely to endeavour at concealment; and sometimes he picks up fragments in obscure corners. His lines to Fenton,

Serene, the sting of pain thy thoughts beguile,
And make afflictions objects of a smile,

brought to my mind some lines on the death of Queen Mary, written by Barnes, of whom I should not have expected to find an imitator;

But thou, O Muse, whose sweet nepenthean tongue
Can charm the pangs of death with deathless song;
Canst *stinging plagues* with *easy thoughts beguile*,
Make pains and tortures objects of a smile.

To detect his imitations were tedious and useless. What he takes he seldom makes worse; and he cannot be justly thought a mean man whom Pope chose for an associate, and whose co-operation was considered by Pope's enemies as so important, that he was attacked by Henley with this ludicrous distich:

Pope came off clean with Homer; but they say
Broome went before, and kindly swept the way,







